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TORIES ARE HOPING THIS BUDGET FITS

FLAHERTY TO BRING ON CUTS IN FIRST FINANCIAL BLUEPRINT AS MAJORITY GOVERNMENT PAGE 19

VANCOUVER metro®

Thursday, March 29, 2012

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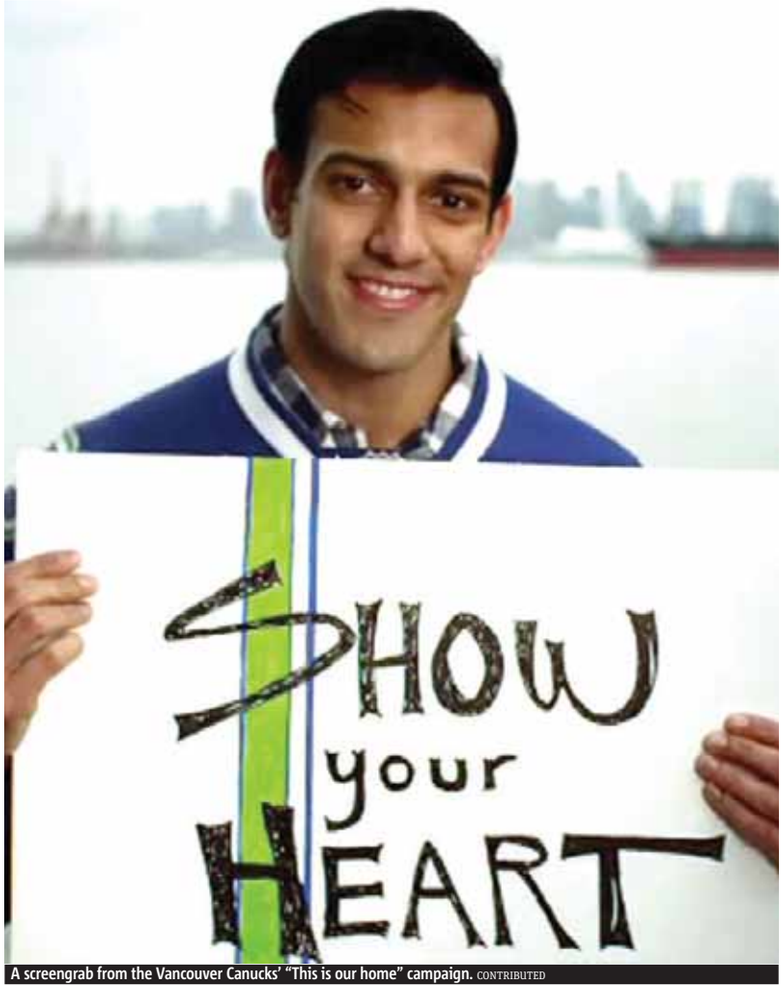

A screengrab from the Vancouver Canucks' "This is our home" campaign. CONTRIBUTED

Canucks out for home ice

Positive branding. NHL team urges fans to celebrate responsibly with new advertising campaign

GRAHAM TEMPLETON
vancouver@metronews.ca

An SFU media expert says a new Canucks ad campaign has more to do with politics and money than with inspiring pride and civic responsibility.

The new "This is our home" campaign features Canucks players and fans professing their love for Vancouver and encourages fans to "celebrate responsibly."

"The Canucks organization is just trying to avoid any government intervention in their business," SFU marketing Prof. Lindsay Meredith said Wednesday.

"The brand is associated with riots now. They want to be perceived as being a good, responsible corporate citizen."

None of the ads in the new initiative makes any reference to the 2011 Stanley Cup riot.

Canucks COO Victor de Bonis said this decision was intended to keep Vancouver from dwelling unnecessarily on the past.

"We use words like respect and unity," he said Wednesday, "to show that (we) really care."

Meredith, however, said the Canucks had "no obligation at all" to involve themselves in any anti-riot campaigns, and that they simply needed to combat the perception that the Canucks caused last year's violence.

De Bonis claims otherwise: "The players, the staff, the management — everybody was enthusiastic about this idea."

The Canucks plan to work with the city to offset any costs it might incur during the upcoming playoff run, and Rogers Arena will not show any away games until the final series — assuming the Canucks make it that far.

Meredith was in agreement with the Canucks organization about one aspect of the new media push, however.

"The effect is going to be massive. This is a huge sports city now. You're damn right this will be noticed."

Focus on gay Asian teens

UBC study concludes that gay, lesbian or bisexual Asian-Canadian teens face 'double-whammy' discrimination PAGE 4

Galaxy in the sky like a diamond

Scientists say dazzling new cosmic jewel is a cut above the rest PAGE 8

Spring onto the stage

From comedy to ballet, a slate of shows are coming to the city PAGE 21

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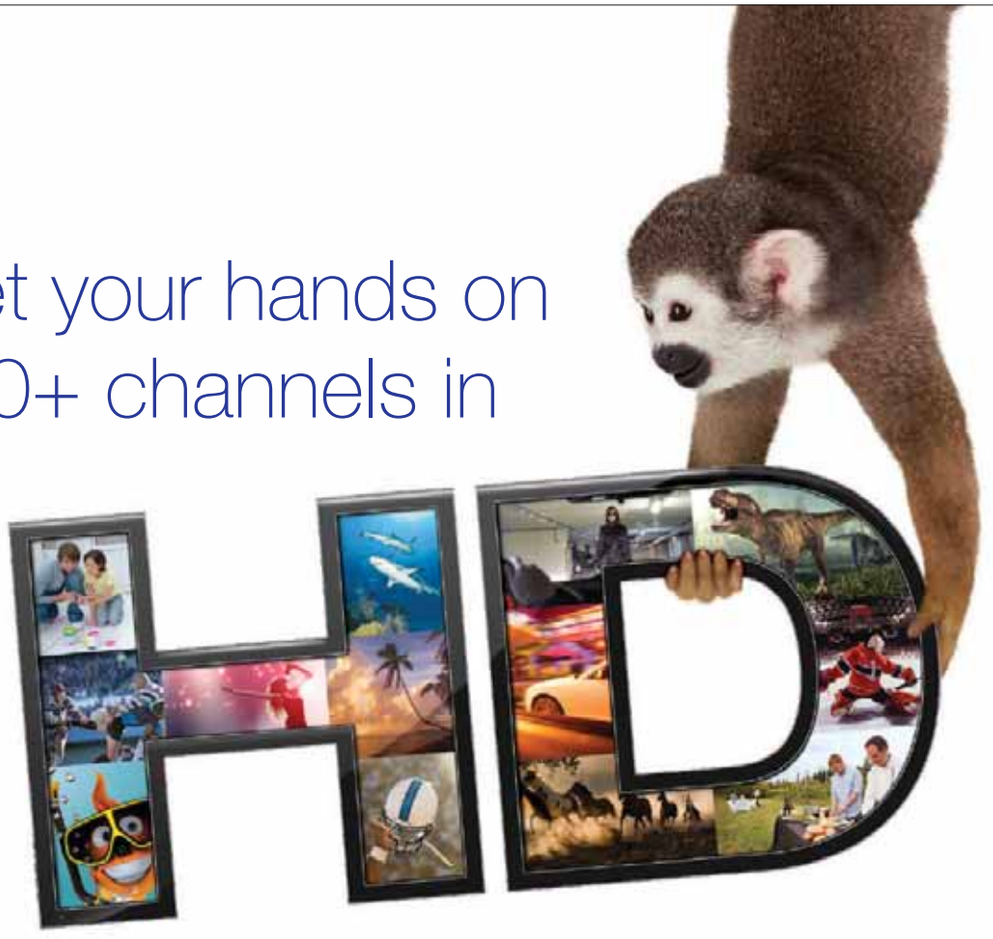

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Family loans

Council approves rent-bank plan

Vancouver will be the latest municipality in B.C. with a rent bank.

The plan was approved in city council Wednesday.

Operational in August, the bank will give families small one-time loans.

METRO

Langley shooting

Mountie told victim he didn't want to fire

A Mountie who shot and killed a man in the victim's bedroom in Langley, B.C., says he tried to get Alvin Wright to drop a knife before he fired.

Sgt. Don Davidson was testifying at a coroner's inquest into the shooting in 2010, which followed a 911 call from Wright's girlfriend.

He says police announced themselves before going into the bedroom, where they found Wright crouched in a closet holding a knife.

Davidson says Wright asked to be shot and stepped toward the officer with the weapon.

The officer says he fired his gun once and Wright fell, saying, "I wasn't going to stab you, dude."

Davidson says he didn't have much room to move in the small room and told Wright he didn't want to shoot him.

The officers involved have already been cleared of any wrongdoing by the Office of the Police Complaints Commissioner.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Ran into street

Police cruiser hits man, 38

A 38-year-old man is recovering with minor injuries after being hit by a police cruiser Tuesday night. The cruiser was travelling eastbound on Dundas Street near Templeton Drive.

METRO

BCTF contract negotiations a 'mission impossible': Jago

In doubt. Newly appointed mediator's labour-relations experience questioned by BCTF president

DANIEL PALMER
vancouver@metronews.ca

A newly appointed mediator in the ongoing teachers' contract negotiation admits he is facing Mission Impossible.

On Wednesday, Education Minister George Abbott announced former University of Northern B.C. president Charles Jago will be conducting the non-binding mediation process under the government's net-zero mandate.

"When I was first approached, I described this as Mission Impossible. I think there are enormous barriers," said Jago, referring to the increasingly bitter relationship between the provincial government and teachers.

BCTF president Susan Lambert said she will participate in the mediation process but she also pointed out Jago's lack of labour-relations experience, as well as his authoring of a 2006 report on the education system containing established opinions on key bargaining points.

"The terms and conditions of this mock mediation are so skewed as to have a predetermined outcome," Lambert said.

"It further concerns me that the nature of that predictable outcome is foreshadowed in the report that was written by Dr. Jago."

The report, Working Together to Improve Performance: Preparing B.C.'s Public Education System for the Future, discusses current bargaining issues such as seniority and professional development, said Lambert.

"What we were looking for was someone of stature who had the authority to make recommendations. What we have here is a person who is largely unknown."

Abbott hoped the mediation process would be embraced by all parties, but admitted the dispute has been intractable for some time.

"Net-zero has been in place for all disputes, all labour negotiations since 2009, and I'm not sure I understand the rationale for the BCTF when 130 other agreements have been reached on that basis," he said.

ElectionsBC records show Jago contributed a total of $1,000 to the B.C. Liberals in 2007 and 2010 — amounts Jago said were for golf-tournament green fees.

"People who have worked with me in the past can attest to the fact that I'm very independent," he said, admitting his appointment as a mediator is unorthodox.

"It's a shot in the dark, if you like, and hopefully it will work out to everyone's benefit."

The mediation process is part of Bill 22, which forced teachers back to work after a three-day strike earlier this month.

Jago must submit his recommendations on all outstanding disputes by June 30, after which the province will legislate a two-year collective agreement for K-12 teachers.

Former UNBC president Charles Jago has been selected by the provincial government to mediate its dispute with B.C. teachers. CONTRIBUTED

Falcon considering political future

B.C. Finance Minister Kevin Falcon THE CANADIAN PRESS

B.C. Finance Minister and deputy premier Kevin Falcon says he's pondering his political future.

One of the options he's considering: sitting out the next provincial election.

Falcon candidly discussed the idea, among others, while fellow Liberal stalwarts reinforced their decisions to run in the May 2013 election with blunt, one-word answers.

Falcon, who was the runner-up to Clark in the February 2011 Liberal leadership contest, said he's rethinking his family life.

"I care a lot about the party," he said. "I've invested a lot of time in it. But I also care a lot about my family. I have a young child at home. Before I make a major decision like that, I want to make sure I spend the time thinking about it and talking to my family and thinking about our future."

Falcon said that any decision about his political future has nothing to do with the apparent decline in popularity of the Liberal government.

"We've typically always been behind in the polls between elections," he said. "I'm not at all concerned about the fact that we happen to be temporarily down in the polls."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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NEWS

Mobile news

Wondering how to dispose of your phone? Just ask it. Cities across the country are using smartphone apps to ease the process of tech recycling. Scan the code for the story

On the web

Disco lunch — hold the mayo

Some workers in Sweden have found an offbeat way to spend their lunch hour. Actually, on-beat is more like it. Disco lights, sweaty bodies and pulsating beats are all on the menu during the lunchtime dance parties that started in Stockholm and are spreading across Europe. Watch at metronews.ca/video

No joke!

New website to help promote comedians

After spending years watching comedians languish due to an inability to organize themselves, local comedy-club owner Chris Hall decided enough was enough.

Thursday marks the launch of mycomedybook.com, a website that aims to connect and display comedians for fans and industry insiders alike.

"It amazed me that there was no centralized database for comedy and comedians," the Sin Bin owner said Wednesday. "Actors and movies have (the Internet Movie Database) .... Why was there nothing for comedy?"

GRAHAM TEMPLETON/FOR METRO

Angling for change

Deep-sea-fishing pact aims to protect sea life

New guidelines have been set out to protect fragile life such as corals and sponges on the ocean floor off the B.C. coast.

The rules are the result of a collaboration between the B.C. bottom-trawling industry, the David Suzuki Foundation and the Living Oceans Society.

The guidelines define the boundaries of the fishery, place limits on the coral and sponge bycatch and provide a procedure to alert skippers if a bycatch exceeds those limits. Scott Wallace of the David Suzuki Foundation says it's the first agreement of its kind anywhere. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Arrest

Border officials seize man for child pornography

A 25-year-old California man has been arrested in Victoria on child-pornography charges.

Benjamin Luber was stopped by Canada Border Services agents after arriving in Victoria yesterday aboard a ferry from Washington state. The agents found evidence of child porn on Luber's computer, and he was turned over to Victoria police who seized his laptop, iPod, cellphone and digital camera.

U.S. law enforcement officials have been informed and Luber has since been allowed to leave Canada.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gay Asian teens face 'double whammy' discrimination

UBC study. Author cites positive relationships, extracurriculars as keys to reducing health risks

KATE WEBB
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Asian Canadian teens who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual (LGB) are 30 times more likely to experience bullying than their heterosexual peers, according to a UBC study.

Elizabeth Saewyc, the lead investigator and a professor of nursing and adolescent medicine at UBC, said the high rate of harassment experienced by those teens makes them 10 times more likely to report problems with alcohol and drug use.

The research, published last week in the Canadian Journal of Community Mental Health, is the first in North America to investigate the links between Asian teens dealing with dual-minority discrimination, problem substance use and supports that can help reduce those risks.

"From a theoretical perspective, it makes really good sense that if you're experiencing racism, that's not good — and so we see certain health problems from the stress of experiencing racism," Saewyc said.

"If you experience homophobia, that's also not good. And, again, lots of health issues are related to the stress that comes from being stigmatized because of sexual orientation. So that double whammy of experiencing both racism and homophobia has got to be not good for you."

The study does not compare the rates of LGB bullying between Asian Canadians and LGB teens of other ethnic groups. Instead, it focuses on factors that can reduce health risks for LGB Asian teens.

Saewyc and her colleagues found bullied teens' chances of problem substance use can be cut in half if they have high levels of school or family connectedness, friends with healthy attitudes about sexuality, and involvement in extracurriculars like sports or music.

By the numbers

6%

The proportion of Asian Canadian teen boys identified as LGB or mostly heterosexual in a 2003 B.C. survey.

A lesbian couple holds hands. MADE UNDERGROUND/CONTRIBUTED

Speaker series scours the globe for inspiration

Marco Tempest, a virtual magician, giving a talk at TED2012: Full Spectrum on Feb. 27 in Long Beach, Calif. RYAN LASH/CONTRIBUTED

The popular TED series has begun its hunt for the world's next remarkable voices and "ideas worth spreading" as it holds auditions in 14 cities around the globe, including Vancouver.

"We're looking for anything. The sky's the limit: musicians, comedians — or it could even be someone that creates shadow puppets," said Kelly Stoetzel, director of TED content in New York City.

"We have performers of all sorts on TED, and I'd really hesitate to limit who auditions in any way, because I'm sure there's a lot of innovative people we haven't heard of."

Everyone is invited to audition online by posting a six-minute-or-less performance clip on TED's website.

Stoetzel says it's tough to describe the ideal TED speaker in terms of any single category. She invites auditions from people who can uniquely and clearly communicate an idea while providing insight into the 2013 theme: The Young. The Wise. The Undiscovered.

She say they should audition if "they have a new cutting-edge idea, a new lens on something that exists — or even if they're able to communicate with a real authenticity."

Event planners are also reaching out to speakers on their radar who have never spoken at a TED event, and are encouraging them to audition.

"We're really excited about some of the interesting people we've read about in Vancouver," said Stoetzel.

KYLA JONAS/METRO

How to audition

- Submissions are being accepted now until April 19. Canadian finalists will be notified April 26 and flown to Vancouver to audition live at the Roundhouse Community Centre on May 31, 2013.
- Audition events are being held in 14 cities and six continents around the world. TED directors are partnering with TEDx organizers in each city to produce the event.

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Court. Teacher cleared of sex-crime charges involving teenage boy

A former Vernon teacher accused of having sex with a 13-year-old student cupped her mouth and sobbed Wednesday as a judge concluded she had a personal relationship with the boy, but not a sexual one.

Justice Alison Beames found the boy's assertions that the relationship eventually led to 231 sexual encounters with Debra Ashton couldn't be believed.

"(It is) a precise number that simply cannot be accepted as reliable and accurate," said Beames, adding the boy's testimony presented other "frailties."

The packed courtroom erupted into clapping and Ashton's supporters cried as Beames read her decision.

"All of the evidence supports the conclusion that the accused and the complainant had a relationship ... that went far beyond teacher and student, and coach and player," the judge said.

The former Vernon teacher and basketball coach, now 47, was facing five charges of sex crimes against the student, who was 12 when the relationship first formed and 13 when the Crown said it became sexual in 2003. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Treaty. Canadian tuna fishermen blocked from U.S. waters, say groups

The U.S. government has suspended a 31-year-old agreement that allowed Canadian vessels to fish for tuna in American waters, two British Columbia industry groups confirmed Wednesday, with one warning the decision could have a domino effect across the entire West Coast fishery.

Both countries signed a treaty in 1981 that allowed cross-border fishing for albacore tuna, but it expired in 2011. Negotiations to renew the treaty have been overshadowed by concerns from American fishermen, who have complained they were being outfished by Canadians.

American negotiators flew to Ottawa last week and surprised Canadian officials by announcing there will be no reciprocal fishery for 2012 while talks for a revised treaty continue, according to the Canadian Highly Migratory Species Foundation and the B.C. Tuna Fishermen's Association. Both groups say they were informed about the decision earlier this week.

"We got a phone call Monday from Ottawa saying the U.S. delegation visited and said there would not be an agreement for this year," the foundation's Lorne Clayton told The Canadian Press.

"That's the decision that was made by the U.S. delegation, that it's their final decision. Our job in the meantime is to convince them that it's not in their best interests to stop the agreement, so we're still working to change their mind."

In the early 1980s, when the treaty was first signed, there was an abundance of tuna near the Queen Charlotte Islands off the northern B.C. coast and it was the Americans who advocated for the agreement, said Gregg Holm, vice-president of the B.C. Tuna Fishermen's Association.

Holm acknowledged that in recent years the tuna fishery has been concentrated south of the border. THE CANADIAN PRESS

SPCA

Lucky cat pulls through injury

There's good reason why a brown tabby cat from Kelowna has been named Miracle.

The feline has made a full recovery after being found badly injured and caught in a leg-hold trap in January.

SPCA spokeswoman Suzanne Pugh says at first officials didn't know whether they'd be able to save the kitty's life.

But Miracle has pulled through and will keep all four legs, and Pugh says officials are now trying to place her in a loving home. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Flight

Restless child grounds plane

A Horizon Air flight from Long Beach, Calif., to Vancouver was forced to make a stop in Portland, Ore., Wednesday because of an unruly child.

The crew of the plane radioed Portland International Airport that the child was not following instructions to remain in a seat.

The plane was met by police who talked to the flight crew and the child's family.

No charges were laid, but the family left the plane before it continued its flight to Vancouver.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Gordie Howe gives a mock elbow shot to Mario Gregorio Wednesday during an event at the Pacific Coliseum to start the countdown for Vancouver's inaugural Scotiabank Pro-Am for Alzheimer's in October. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Mr. Hockey sticks it to Alzheimer's

Health. Hockey hero launching first annual pro-am tourney in city

Mario Gregorio was all smiles as he shook Gordie Howe's hand to thank him for drawing attention to a disease that hits close to home.

Mr. Hockey, accompanied by son Marty, was in town Wednesday to start the countdown to Vancouver's inaugural Scotiabank Pro-Am for Alzheimer's.

The October tournament will raise funds for the Gordie and Colleen Howe Fund for Alzheimer's, which is helping fund research and programs for the Alzheimer Society of B.C. and Toronto's Baycrest, a health organization that focuses on aging and brain health.

Gordie's wife Colleen died of Pick's disease, a rare form of dementia, in 2009.

"Gordie loves being out there and meeting people," said Marty, who has been his father's voice in public after Gordie stopped doing media interviews.

"He does forget some things," he said of his father's state of health. "As long he gets his nap in the afternoon after some of the events before he does another one, he's in good shape."

Marty said his brother Murray, an Ohio-based radiologist, had Gordie take a test that determines whether a person has Alzheimer's. Marty said they're confident that Gordie doesn't have Alzheimer's based on the results.

"But he does have a loss of memory still," he said, citing an early head injury Gordie suffered in the '50s that could have contributed to the problem.

Gregorio, who has been living with Alzheimer's since 2008, said it's great that a hockey legend like Gordie is spreading awareness and raising funds for research to find a cure for the disease.

The 63-year-old Burnaby resident said the disease has affected his ability to remember simple things like computer passwords or where he put his reading glasses.

He said he hates sitting alone at home doing nothing, so he keeps himself busy by going for walks every day and volunteering.

"Why not enjoy life the best you can?" he said.

The 2012 Vancouver Scotiabank Pro-Am will run Oct. 26-28 at the Canlan Ice Sports North Shore.

For more information, visit scotiabankproam.com.

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

Showing off Vancouver's fun side

It started with a University of B.C. lip-dub video, and now a group of young filmmakers is hoping its next big video project will erase Vancouver's "no-fun city" moniker and show the world the city's sense of community.

The UBC LipDub has gone viral on YouTube, with more than 1.5 million views since its release. The video features more than 1,000 university and high school students and community members lip syncing to Pink's Raise Your Glass and Mariana Trench's Celebrity Status.

More than 1,000 students and community members gathered for a UBC lip-dub video, which already has more than 1.5 million YouTube hits. ANDREW COHEN PRODUCTIONS LTD./CONTRIBUTED

Organizers say the video was created to promote Vancouver globally and unite the local student community.

After the tremendous success of the video, a group of current students and graduates is venturing on a new project called PlayBack.

"We're going to flood downtown with over 1,000 people and show them that the youth of the city can work together without setting cop cars on fire," said Michael Gunion, the project's first assistant director. "We need to step up and show the world how Vancouver is a fun city."

Gunion said PlayBack, which will have a one-day filming in September, will be a "mass-movement production" where people will get to show off their special skills, crazy costumes and dance moves.

Youth and community members will flood the streets surrounding BC Place and make their way inside for the final production number, he added.

in taking part to visit acpedge.com. PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

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Galaxy resembles 'emerald-cut' diamond

Spotted. Shiny new galaxy dubbed Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds

It is the 74,886th galaxy in the Lyon Extragalactic Database (LEDA) of 1.5-million galaxies, but some people are calling the new rectangular cosmic jewel Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds.

"We did unofficially refer to it as the 'emerald-cut' galaxy" because of its striking resemblance to an emerald-cut diamond, Australian astronomer Dr. Alister Graham said. That triggered the even more unofficial name from the old Beatles song.

And it fits, Graham said. When he and his colleagues first spotted LEDA 074886 some 70-million light years away, their reaction was "Wow, will you look at that."

Emerald

Its importance isn't just in its shape, Graham said.

- "In recent years there has been an increased awareness of blue elliptical-shaped galaxies. Perhaps up to four per cent of galaxies fall into this category."

The astronomers discovered the galaxy last year but are just reporting it now in the Astrophysics Journal.

The dazzling dwarf galaxy with its spinning deep blue core, blinding white "emerald-cut" surface and sparking red rim is an astronomic anomaly.

"Symmetrical rectangular galaxies are very unusual. We were very surprised to find it," Graham said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Astronomers discovered the galaxy last year but are just reporting it now in the Astrophysics Journal. SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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See Amy upgrade more things at youtube.com/downy
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Do you take milk with your dog?

Beyonce, a Dachshund puppy vying for the title of World's Smallest Dog, is fed in a coffee cup on Wednesday in New York. Animal rescuers in Northern California say Beyonce was so small at birth that she could fit into a spoon. BEBETO MATTHEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Coffee junkies

Grab a java to get you going? Think again, study says

Research conducted by University of British Columbia psychologists is shedding new light on how amphetamines and caffeine affect the motivation of workers and slackers.

A study published in the journal Neuropsychopharmacology, has found that amphetamines, specifically speed, cause workers to slack off and slackers to work harder.

Caffeine, on the other hand, causes workers to slack off but doesn't seem to have any effect on slackers.

The findings have implications for people like long-distance truck drivers who use stimulants to remain vigilant for hours on end, said Jay Hosking, a PhD candidate and one of four people who worked on the project.

"What's working for some people may not be working for others," Hosking said.

The research took place at the university over nine months, starting in 2009, and involved 40 male rats.

Hosking said members of the team wanted to learn how people make decisions and why some people make different decisions than others.

"Every day at work and anywhere we're confronted with this thing where we can either work towards something or be satisfied with the status quo," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Canada-U.S. Omar Khadr poised to be transferred north of border in May

A "frustrated" Omar Khadr could be back in Canada by the end of May, with both Ottawa and Washington poised to approve his transfer from Guantanamo Bay, where the convicted war criminal has been held for almost a decade, the Canadian Press has learned.

A source familiar with the file said U.S. Secretary of Defence Leon Panetta was expected to sign off on the transfer within a week.

"It's on his desk, it's ready," the source said Wednesday. "The U.S. has no concerns about (Khadr)."

Khadr has been caught up in a bureaucratic catch-22 since becoming eligible to leave the U.S. prison in Cuba last October under terms of a plea agreement struck a year earlier.

The Toronto-born Khadr, 25, pleaded guilty before a much-maligned U.S. military commission to five war crimes he committed as a 15-year-old in Afghanistan in July 2002.

In exchange, the Canadian citizen was given an eight-year sentence, with one year to be served in Guantanamo Bay and the remainder in Canada.

Courtroom sketch of Omar Khadr.
JANET HAMLIN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government has been in no hurry to approve the transfer request, which Khadr's lawyers submitted to both governments a year ago.

Instead, the source said, Ottawa has been scrutinizing the application far more closely than required, looking at issues such as his parole eligibility, which would essentially be almost immediate.

"I think they have stalled the proceedings — the U.S. would have sent him home a lot earlier if things had been worked out in Canada," the source said."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

If the shoe fits

Rafferty trial. Woman testifies she found pair of shoes by side of road after Tori was murdered

The shoes that Terri-Lynne McClintic says Victoria Stafford was wearing when was killed were the focus today at the first-degree murder trial of McClintic's former boyfriend.

McClintic testified earlier at Michael Rafferty's trial that after Tori was killed north of Guelph, Ont., he instructed her to throw her shoes out the car window on a side road.

Rafferty, 31, has pleaded not guilty to first-degree murder, sexual assault causing bodily harm and kidnapping.

A woman who lives in the area testified today that in early April 2009 — the month Tori was killed — she was taking a walk on Sideroad 6 near her home north of Guelph and found a pair of white basketball shoes with blue trim.

McClintic testified that after Tori was killed Rafferty went to great lengths to cover up their crime, including hiding Tori's body under a rock pile, reversing over tire tracks to make them less distinguishable, providing McClintic with a change of clothes, discarding the clothes they were wearing as well as the murder weapon and throwing out the shoes.

A pair of white basketball shoes entered as an exhibit at the trial of Michael Rafferty in London, Ont., on Wednesday.
HANDOUT/THE CANADIAN PRESS

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Congrats! That'll be a million dollars

Australia's foreign affairs minister is looking into the case of a Sydney couple stuck with a million-dollar hospital bill after their daughter was born in Vancouver last August.

John Kan and Rachel Evans had taken out extra insurance for Evans' pregnancy without realizing the policy would not cover the birth or the baby.

They were about to return to Australia after their B.C. vacation when Evans went into premature labour at the airport.

Piper Kan stayed in the neonatal ward of the B.C. Women's Hospital and Health Centre for three months and the bill ended up being about $1 million.

Evans said she is grateful for any help the government might be able to provide.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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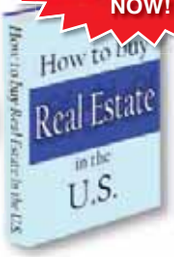

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Crash leaves two in critical condition

Accident. Brinks tractor-trailer collides with rock face in northern Ontario, spilling millions of loonies and toonies

Police investigate the scene after a crash in northern Ontario on Wednesday. Millions of dollars in coins and a shipment of candy were scattered across the highway following the crash of a Brinks tractor-trailer that seriously injured two people. CONTRIBUTED/ONTARIO PROVINCIAL POLICE/ THE CANADIAN PRESS

Millions of dollars in coins and a shipment of candy were scattered across an Ontario highway Wednesday following the crash of a Brinks tractor-trailer that seriously injured two people.

Both of the men who were in the Brinks truck were taken to hospital with life-threatening injuries, police said.

The crash happened around 4 a.m. on Highway 11, north of Kirkland Lake in northeastern Ontario, when the truck crossed the centre line and collided with a rock face, said Ontario Provincial Police Const. Marc Depatie.

The crash also caused a number of chain-reaction collisions, but the injuries were minor, he said. One of the trucks involved in the resulting crashes was carrying candy, he said.

That candy, along with $3 to $5 million worth of loonies and toonies were strewn on the road and in the surrounding bush. The highway was closed by police, who essentially stood guard until the money could be removed.

"A private contractor will be using magnets and other mechanisms to recover the dispersed load," but clearing up the wreckage remains the top priority, Depatie said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Labour disputes. Canada Post worker accuses Raitt of using bullying tactics

The recent tensions between Air Canada workers and Lisa Raitt reminded Jim Gallant of the time he gave the federal labour minister a piece of his mind in public.

The veteran Canada Post worker said he got a pair of RCMP officers knocking on his office door — a response he equated to the sudden suspensions that triggered last week's early morning wildcat strike at Canada's largest airline. Three Air Canada workers were suspended recently for heckling Raitt at Toronto's Pearson airport. Those suspensions triggered a wildcat strike by fellow workers angered by the Conservative government bringing in back-to-work legislation and sending their contract dispute with the airline to arbitration.

Gallant, a regional grievance officer with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers with 23 years at Canada Post, was in Toronto attending a hockey game at the Air Canada Centre last October when he said he accused Raitt to her face of lying to the Senate and the House of Commons when explaining why postal employees had to be ordered back to work.

Officials routinely report unusual incidents that take place on off-hours, said security consultant Chris Mathers, a former RCMP officer himself.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Minister of Labour Lisa Raitt. SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nuclear reactor still measures fatal radiation levels

Workers conduct radiation measurement at the tsunami-crippled Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant. TOKYO ELECTRIC POWER CO./THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One of Japan's crippled nuclear reactors still has fatally high radiation levels and hardly any water to cool its fuel, according to an internal examination that reinforces doubts about the plant's stability.

A tool equipped with a tiny video camera, a thermometer, a dosimeter and a water gauge was used to assess damage inside the No. 2 reactor's containment chamber Tuesday for the second time since the tsunami swept into the Fukushima Dai-ichi plant a year ago.

The data collected showed the damage from the disaster is so severe, the plant operator will have to develop special equipment and technology to tolerate the harsh environment and decommission the plant, a process expected to last decades.

Tuesday's examination with an industrial endoscope detected radiation levels up to 10 times the fatal dose inside the chamber.

Particles from melted fuel have probably sent radiation levels up to a dangerously high 70 sieverts per hour inside the container, said Junichi Matsumoto, spokesman for Tokyo Electric Power Co.

The figure far exceeds the highest level previously detected, 10 sieverts per hour, which was detected last year.

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Losing it in the air

A quick look at infamous flyers

JetBlue is reviewing its mental health checks for pilots after Captain Clayton Osbon went berserk at New York's JFK airport on Tuesday. Planes can have a funny effect on people, so we looked at some of the other worst-ever flyers.

Gerard Depardieu
The renowned French actor caused trouble on a Paris-Dublin flight last summer. As the plane was about to take off, Depardieu was denied entry to the toilets and so used a water bottle instead, which resulted in a terrible mess on the floor. Depardieu was escorted off the flight, and explained the incident by saying, "I am an elephant."

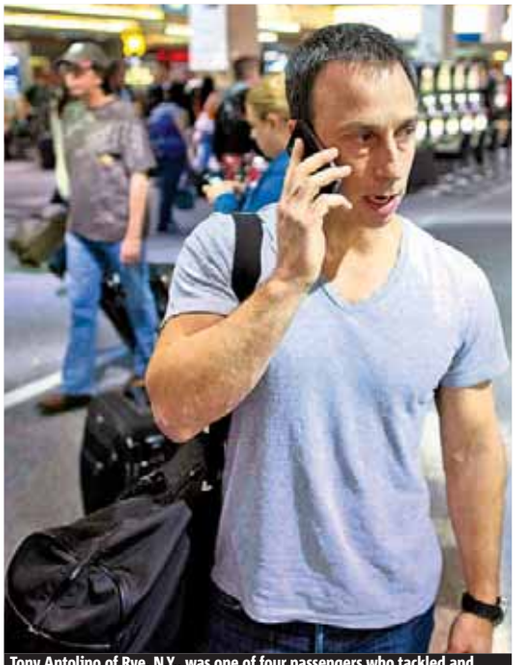
RIM executives
George Campbell and Paul Alexander Wilson were high-ranking officials with the BlackBerry maker, but had to be tied up after drunken swearing and violence on a December flight. The executives then attempted to chew through the restraints.

Naomi Campbell
The supermodel subjected airport staff to a barrage of abuse after finding her bags had not been loaded at Heathrow in 2008. Police were called and Campbell kicked and spat at them, accusing them of prejudice because she was "black and famous." She received 200 hours of community service.

Steven Slater
Clayton Osbon wasn't the first JetBlue employee to leave his senses on a plane. In 2010, flight attendant Slater chose to retire in style, calling one passenger a "f--king a--hole" on the loudspeaker before grabbing a beer and exiting via the emergency slide.

Alec Baldwin
Another actor with flight issues, the 30 Rock star was kicked off an American Airlines flight last year after refusing to stop playing Words With Friends on his cellphone.

Pilot's odd behaviour forces passengers to act



Tony Antolino of Rye, N.Y., was one of four passengers who tackled and restrained the captain. JULIE JACOBSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JetBlue airline.
Co-pilot takes over as passengers restrain captain

A JetBlue Airways captain, who sprinted through the cabin of a Las Vegas-bound flight screaming about terrorists, Jesus and Sept. 11, was charged Wednesday with interfering with a flight crew, federal authorities said.

Captain Clayton Osbon told his co-pilot that "things just don't matter" shortly after JetBlue Flight 191 from New York departed Tuesday, according to an affidavit. Osbon, who was ultimately tackled by passengers while the plane made an emergency landing in Texas, told his co-pilot that "we're not going to Vegas" and began what was described as a sermon, the court documents said.

"The (first officer) became really worried when Osbon said 'we need to take a leap of faith,'" according to the sworn affidavit given by an FBI agent. "Osbon started trying to correlate completely unrelated numbers like different radio frequencies, and he talked about sins in Las Vegas."

Osbon left the cockpit soon after and tensions on the plane began to escalate, according to witness accounts compiled by investigators. Osbon, described by neighbours in Georgia as tall and muscular, "aggressively" grabbed the hands of a flight attendant who confronted him and later sprinted down the cabin while being chased.

Passengers said they used seat-belt extenders and zip-tie handcuffs to restrain Osbon for more than 20 minutes while the plane landed.

The charges against Osbon, 49, were filed in Texas. He was being held Wednesday at Northwest Texas Healthcare System in Amarillo and remains under a medical evaluation.

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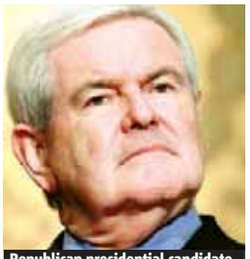
U.S. presidential race. Gingrich refuses to bow out of Republican primary

Newt Gingrich's White House aspirations have been on life support for weeks, but the struggling Republican haughtily defended his decision to remain in his party's presidential race on Wednesday despite dismal primary results, a serious debt problem and a dramatic cut in staff.

The former speaker of the House of Representatives expressed dismay about suggestions that he should drop out of the race to enable Mitt Romney to seal the nomination well before the party convention in August.

"For some reason everybody in this establishment is chanting that (Rick) Santorum and I should quit," he said in a radio interview in the U.S. capital, although Santorum has not, in fact, been facing the same barrage of calls to drop out that Gingrich has.

"Well, you know, Romney has to earn this. It's not going to be given to him and we have every right to run. I have 176,000 folks who go on to Newt.org and donated, and I think that's a very important factor. So I owe the folks who have been supporting me."



Republican presidential candidate Newt Gingrich. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

He added no one would expect a losing sports team to stop playing mid-season.

Gingrich's stand comes after a series of devastating defeats in the race. Despite serving the state of Georgia for two decades as congressman, that was one of only two states he's been able to win. South Carolina was another.

A new CNN/ORC poll shows him running dead last nationally, behind even libertarian Ron Paul, with 60 per cent of Republicans saying he should exit the race. He's got only five per cent of support among Wisconsin voters, who cast ballots in their state primary next week.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Assault. Canadians offer support for Mexican beating suspect: Report

KATIE TURNER
Metro in Calgary

While Calgarian Sheila Nabb is still recovering from a brutal beating at a Mazatlan hotel, reports from a Mexican media outlet indicate a group of Canadians are supporting the alleged assailant.

Nabb was found badly beaten in a hotel elevator in January while on vacation.

In the days following the attack, Mexican authorities arrested José Ramón Acosta Quintero.

A translation from Mazatlan news outlet Noroeste reads, "Incredibly, it was learned that members of the Canadian community in the port hosted a dinner in aid of Acosta Quintero (a) few days ago, in order to raise funds and pay a lawyer."

When contacted by Metro, reporters from Noroeste confirmed a source informed them of the fundraiser hosted by Canadians in Mexico.

Nabb's boss, Dr. David Peterson, said he was initially surprised and disturbed to hear of the fundraiser, adding she has been going through a long, difficult recovery.

WITH FILES FROM JEREMY NOLAIS

Sheila Nabb and her husband Andrew are shown in a family handout photo. THE CANADIAN PRESS/HO

State lottery

Record jackpot still up for grabs

It's almost unimaginable. No one picked the six correct numbers in the latest multi-state Mega Millions lottery game in the U.S., sending the jackpot to a record $476 million for the Friday drawing.

Tuesday night's jackpot was $363 million, fed by weeks of drawings without a top winner.

The previous record jackpot in the Mega Millions game was $390 million in 2007, split by two winners in New Jersey and Georgia.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Sexual assault

Attempted-rape case goes to trial

While Dominique Strauss-Kahn faces fresh charges in his native France amid a prostitution investigation, a judge in New York may decide Wednesday whether to allow a civil case accusing him of sexually assaulting a hotel maid to go forward.

The 62-year-old former chief of the International Monetary Fund was charged last year with attempted rape and other crimes after the May 14 encounter with hotel maid Nafissatou Diallo, but the criminal case was dropped after prosecutors lost faith in her credibility.

Still, she vowed to have her day in court and sued Strauss-Kahn. She maintains he attacked her when she came to clean his luxury suite at the Sofitel Hotel.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

London 2012

Britain bulks up Olympic security

Britain has planned for a dizzying array of security nightmares surrounding the Olympics, including a co-ordinated attack like the London transit bombings, a dirty bomb or a cyber-attack.

In the wake of France's deadly shootings, one scenario weighing heavily on the minds of security officials is a terrorist operating with little or no help from others.

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Two of Canada's younger federal politicians are grabbing attention and raising money for the Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation by trading their metaphorical political jabs for literal ones in a boxing ring this weekend. But with young people staying away from voting in droves, Metro decided to ask them and the NDP's youngest leadership contender if they have any ideas about how to hold the public's attention and attract more youth to politics.

METRO OTTAWA

Young politicos duke it out for youth engagement

Conservative Sen. Patrick Brazeau flexes his muscles outside Parliament in Ottawa. SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO

Young Tory senator fights in ring, on Twitter. There should be more young people in the Senate: Patrick Brazeau

Patrick Brazeau doesn't look like your archetypal senator — especially in his Twitter profile pic, showing off his generous, tattooed muscles.

Brazeau, 37, hails from Kitigan Zibi First Nation in Quebec, served in the Canadian Forces and was chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples before he was the youngest Canadian ever named to the Senate in 2008.

Sober second thought doesn't necessarily improve with age, he said.

"Many people who've had long careers and are appointed to the Senate, obviously they have many things to contribute, but equally important is to have young voices in the Senate," he said.

He'll be fighting for the Conservatives when he boxes Justin Trudeau at an Ottawa Regional Cancer Foundation fundraiser on Saturday — something his older colleagues in the Senate aren't as able to do.

He often takes ideological fights with "leftists" to Twitter, engaging in flame wars with citizens, politicians and journalists.

"I'm certainly not a rebel, but I'm certainly not afraid of answering back in a factual manner as much as I can," he said.

Brazeau said he also uses social media to encourage young people — especially aboriginal youth — to get involved in politics.

"It's doubly hard to engage aboriginal youth," he said. "Aboriginal youth feel as though they are selling out to mainstream Canada and they may feel assimilated.

"I think it's the exact opposite effect. The more people who become engaged, it can only mean a better life for them."

JESSICA SMITH/METRO

Credibility

"I would hope that any youth would listen to any politician who would have a good and positive message, but I think that the fact that I am a little bit younger than most of my colleagues, it lends a little bit of credibility."

Patrick Brazeau
On engaging youth

Young Liberal MP fights to be more than a younger version of his dad. Developing own expertise, own sense of identity is important whatever field you go into: Justin Trudeau

Justin Trudeau certainly isn't the youngest MP kicking around the House of Commons these days. But no matter what his age, he will always be perceived as a younger version of his dad.

Except that's the comparison Trudeau is trying to distance himself from, looking to make his own mark in his third year as Liberal MP for Papineau.

"I bring my own aspects to politics on my own merits and I think that's very, very important for any young person going into any field — that they be able to develop their own expertise, their own sense of identity," said Trudeau, 40.

So what makes him stand out from his slightly older peers on Parliament Hill?

For one, he said voting isn't "cool" and doesn't want to make it appear cool either.

"You don't make voting cool, that's where everyone has failed," he said. "What you have to do is make voting important to young people. Make them understand that their voices matter."

Trudeau — who has more than 120,000 Twitter followers — said he can do that by engaging youth through social media.

A Twitter campaign is just the start, though. He said he wants to mobilize youth in the streets to get them more interested in politics.

JOE LOFARO/METRO

Mobilization

"If youth voted to 80 per cent turnout the way seniors vote to 80 per cent turnout, we'd never have another conversation about tuition fees in Parliament ever."

Justin Trudeau
On the youth vote

Justin Trudeau outside Parliament in Ottawa. SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO

Niki Ashton. CONTRIBUTED

Young NDP MP made a bid for party leadership. Being at the forefront encourages others to get involved: Niki Ashton

Niki Ashton isn't part of any literal boxing matches, but she stepped up as a contender in her party's biggest title bout — the race to replace Jack Layton.

Ashton sometimes — but not always — got more attention for her youth than her ideas in her NDP leadership bid.

"Some people looked at my age and thought it was a plus, and some people looked beyond my age," said the 29-year-old MP for Churchill, adding she's happy to be a standard-bearer for young Canadians.

"We've been told that we're the generation that may live less well-off than our parents, and I find that statement unacceptable," Ashton said. "I mean, we've got tremendous wealth, tremendous opportunity in our country and there's no reason we should be less well-off."

Ashton acknowledged young people are less likely to vote, but they're easier to reach through social media and issue-based campaigns. Seeing more people their age in politics, she said, also helps.

"More young people get involved when they see young people at the forefront and speaking out on the issues that matter," she said. "Our party, I'm proud to say, is one where if you turn on the TV and watch Parliament, we actually look like Canada. The same cannot be said for other parties that have very little representation from young people or women or the diversity of Canada."

STEVE COLLINS/FOR METRO

Visibility

"Jack Layton inspired many people, many young people particularly, to come out and be part of the process, and that's something that I very much want to continue."

Niki Ashton
On engaging youth

Be sure to go to metronews.ca for coverage of the Trudeau-Brazeau boxing match happening at the Hampton Inn in Ottawa at 8:30 p.m. Metro columnist Steve Collins will also be live tweeting the fight @metrottawa.

Meet Canada's youngest MPs

SEAN MCKIBBON/METRO

#1

Pierre-Luc Dusseault

NDP—Sherbrooke

Age 20

#2

Charmaine Borg

NDP—Terrebonne-Blainville

Age 21

#3

Mylène Freeman

NDP—Argenteuil-Papineau-Mirabel

Age 22

#4

Michelle Rempel

Con.—Calgary Centre-North

Age 31

#5

Pierre Poilievre

Con.—Nepean-Carleton

Age 32

#6

Andrew Scheer

Con.—Regina-Qu'Appelle

Age 32

#7

Scott Andrews

Lib.—Avalon

Age 37

#8

Jean-François Fortin

BQ.—Haute-Gaspésie-La Mitis-Matane-Matapédia

Age 38

#9

Justin Trudeau

Lib.—Papineau

Age 40

#10

Scott Simms

Lib.—Bonavista-Gander-Grand Falls-Windsor

Age 42

Everything old was once young too — including Parliament's Rat Pack

Old politicians were young once, too, and it's perhaps no surprise that many older prominent politicians in office (and some out of office) were once also hailed as the new young bucks of their day.

Following the Liberal party's defeat in the 1984 election to Brian Mulroney, a group of young and then relatively unknown Liberals gained prominence and was dubbed the Rat Pack. The group included Don Boudria, Sheila Copps, Brian Tobin and John Nunziata.

The Liberal party's Rat Pack, from left, Brian Tobin, Don Boudria, Sheila Copps and John Nunziata joke with then-Opposition leader John Turner, centre, after giving him a Rat Pack T-shirt in his Parliament Hill office in 1985.
RON POLING/THE CANADIAN PRESS

In the late 1990s a group of Reform-party politicians, Jason Kenney, Rahim Jaffer and Rob Anders, followed in the Rat Pack's footsteps and were dubbed the Snack Pack because of their youth and penchant for eating junk food while talking policy. **METRO**

FOR MORE POLITICAL COVERAGE, VISIT METRONEWS.CA

Questions

Take our MP quiz

Test your MP smarts:

1. With 17 MPs under the age of 30 and an average age of 47.12, the NDP is collectively the youngest party in the House of Commons. Which is the oldest?
2. Pierre-Luc Dusseault (NDP-Sherbrooke) is not only the youngest MP in parliament, but the youngest ever elected in Canada. Who represented his riding on the day he was born?
3. Who is the youngest MP on the Conservative benches?
4. Who's the youngest Liberal?
5. Who is the oldest MP in the House of Commons?
6. The average age of the House dropped even further in February when this 37-year-old MP brought her infant son, Skander-Jack, into the Chamber. Who was she?
7. Speaker of the House Andrew Scheer is the youngest ever elected to the office. What is his official job description?
8. Who is the youngest party leader in the House of Commons?
9. Who is the youngest person ever appointed to the Senate?
10. Youngest minister in the Harper cabinet?

MP quiz answers

How well do you know your MPs?

1. Unless you count the one-member Green party (Leader Elizabeth May is 57), the Liberals are the oldest party, with an average age of 54.56 years. The Conservative caucus averages 51.91 years.
2. On May 31, 1991, Quebec Premier Jean Charest.
3. Charlotte Rempel (Calgary Centre-North) is the youngest Conservative MP at 31.
4. Scott Andrews (Avalon, Newfoundland and Labrador) is 37.
5. Conservative Ray Boughen (Palliser) is the House of Commons' most senior member at age 74.
6. Sana Hassainia (NDP-Verchères-Les Patriotes). She named Skander-Jack in honour of NDP leader Jack Layton.
7. "Chair Occupant."
8. Prime Minister Stephen Harper, 52.
9. Liberal-Conservative William Miller was 32 when he went to the Red Chamber in 1867. He stayed until his death in 1912 at the age of 77.
10. Heritage Minister James Moore, 35.

Homeowners sweating over rates: Study

BMO survey. 57 per cent of respondents believe they could still afford their homes if interest rates were to spike by two per cent

Four in 10 Canadians would be unsure about whether they could afford their homes if their mortgage rate went up by as little as two percentage points, according to a new study from the Bank of Montreal.

The survey, compiled for BMO by Leger Marketing, found 43 per cent believe a increase from three per cent to five per cent would either hamper their ability to pay or leave them on unsure footing.

The survey was conducted Feb. 21 to 23, two weeks before BMO sparked a round of special rate reductions among Canadian banks.

The survey's results were announced a day before the five-year special rate ended on Wednesday.

BMO's special dropped the five-year rate by half a percentage point to 2.99 per cent from 3.49 per cent and other banks followed.

Since then, Royal, TD and National banks have announced their five-year posted rates will go up on Thursday to 5.44 per cent — an increase of nearly 2.5 percentage points from the sale price.

"At first when you look at this, you think, 'Oh, my goodness, that's pretty scary,'" said Laura Parsons, a mortgage expert at BMO.

"But if we get clients in to take a good hard look at how they're spending their money, I think they'd find that extra two per cent in their budget — it would just mean they'd have to cut back on certain things."

One in five Canadians surveyed said a two-percentage-point rise would hurt their ability to make mortgage payments, while 23 per cent said they were unsure whether a rise would affect them.

The study, which surveyed some 1,500 Canadians in February, has a 2.5 per cent margin of error 19 times out of 20.

The survey findings come as some of Canada's biggest banks begin raising variable mortgage rates, even though the Bank of Canada's overnight interest rate remains unchanged.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Household debt

The era of cheap borrowing has encouraged many Canadians to buy houses they may not otherwise have been able to afford.

- Both Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and Bank of Canada Governor Mark Carney have flagged the danger to the economy of Canadians becoming more indebted, mostly through taking advantage of low rates to buy homes or take out home-equity loans.
- In a report last week, Doug Porter, deputy chief economist at BMO Capital Markets, and colleague Benjamin Reitzes argued that with the U.S. recovery gathering steam, central bankers on both sides of the border are becoming more comfortable with the economy and less so with historically depressed interest rates.

Retail. Reitmans' quarterly profits, sales down

Clothing retailer Reitmans reported a steep drop in profits and sales during its most recent quarter as shoppers cut back spending and the company saw margins squeezed.

The Montreal-based company said net earnings for the three months ended Jan. 28 were $4.7 million, or seven cents per share, compared to the $13.8 million, or 21 cents per share, it earned during same period a year earlier.

Sales in what was the last quarter of the company's 2012 financial year were just under $260 million, compared with $268.7 million a year ago, as same-store sales fell 1.7 per cent.

The company's gross margin for the quarter was 64.4 per cent, down from 66.9 per cent a year ago, as a stronger Canadian dollar was offset by increased promotional activity.

Reitmans shares fell 20 cents to $15.89 on the Toronto Stock Exchange Wednesday.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Labour

Union fights Target Canada hiring policy

The United Food and Commercial Workers Union says Target has told Zellers employees that they are welcome to reapply for the same job once the U.S. chain takes over 100 Zellers stores next year.

Spokesman Derek Johnstone says that isn't fair to employees who have been in the same store, doing the same job for many years.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Expansion

Canadian Helicopters seeks global deals

Canadian Helicopters Group hopes to use its acquisition of Helicopters (N.Z.) Ltd. last year as a model for future deals as it looks to grow its business around the world, chief executive Don Wall said Wednesday.

The deal for HNZ gave the Montreal-based company a base in New Zealand and Southeast Asia from which to build its business.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Weather may sap maple-syrup producers' profits

Emile Picard samples fresh maple syrup at the Au Pieds de Cochon sugar shack in St-Benoit-de-Mirabel, Que. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Some of Canada's maple-syrup producers say they're expecting a financial hit as recent warm weather cut the season short this year, but the price that consumers pay for the sweet stuff should remain stable.

"We don't want consumers to think it's absolutely not out there anymore, but there's less," said Ray Bonenberg, president of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association.

It shouldn't affect the price, Bonenberg said, adding there was a small increase in the price of maple syrup last year and the price is set every couple of years.

"A lot of the product is already sold and you charge the price that you would normally expect to charge," Bonenberg said from his farm near Pembroke, Ont.

"Most producers are not about capitalizing on a shortage and shoving a lot of that on the consumer."

Ontario's maple syrup producers are producing anywhere from 20 per cent to 50 per cent or so of what they normally make, he said. Ontario produced about two million litres of maple syrup last year.

Along with Ontario, the provinces of Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are Canada's major producers and they all had an early start, and in some cases, an early end to the season due the recent unseasonable temperatures. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Syrup season

- In New Brunswick, if the weather co-operates, production should reach last year's level.
- In Quebec, Canada's biggest producer of maple syrup, production has wrapped up early except for the eastern side and quantities are down in the southern area.

Bureaucracy to bear brunt of cuts: Flaherty

Federal budget.
Conservative sources say spending cutbacks likely to total $7 billion in annual savings by the 2014-15 fiscal year

Sources and officials agree Jim Flaherty's seventh budget — and first with a parliamentary majority to back it — will be his longest and most far-reaching, laying the foundations for a business-friendly Canada with smaller government and curtailed social entitlements.

The finance minister said much of the burden of cuts will fall primarily on the public service — which will shed tens of thousands of jobs — insisting services to Canadians will be mostly left untouched.

The budget will also seek to curtail long-term spending by slowing the growth of entitlements such as elderly benefits under Old Age Security, building on December's decision to limit future health-care transfers to the growth in the economy.

Reports suggest Flaherty also intends to give notice to the public-service unions they must pay more for their indexed pension plans.

And the CBC will likely see its wings clipped, by anywhere from five to 10 per cent of the annual $1-billion funding.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Cost-cutting

"There are (service) consequences, but most of it is back-office stuff."

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty, on forthcoming cuts in the federal budget

Finance Minister Jim Flaherty tries on a pair of new shoes Wednesday in Ottawa ahead of his budget delivery Thursday. FRED CHARTRAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Budget crunch

MPs trim own spending by $30M

The House of Commons announced its own belt-tightening plan on the eve of the federal budget.

The secretive board of internal economy, an all-party committee that oversees MP budgets and the operation of their offices, says spending will decrease by $30.3 million over the next three years.

The cuts include a reduction in MP office budgets of under two per cent.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Moment

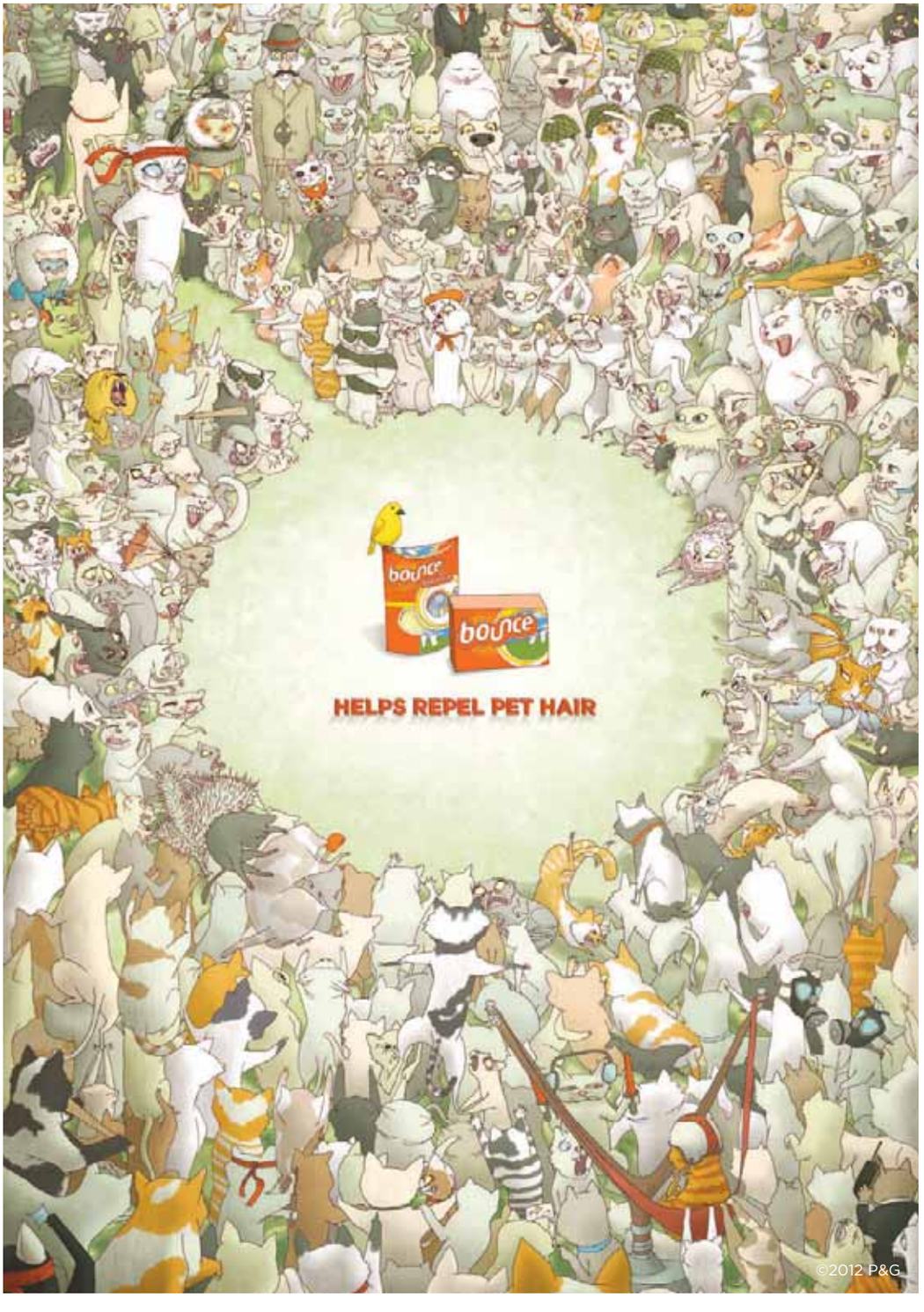
DOLLAR
100.21¢ US
(-0.3¢)

TSX
12,413.86 (-98.18)

OIL
$105.41 US (-$1.92)

GOLD
$1,657.90 US (-$27.00)

Natural gas: $2.191 US (-1.7¢)
Dow Jones: 13,126.21 (-71.52)



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REACH DEEPER INTO YOUR POCKETS — LITERALLY

HE SAYS...
John Mazerolle
metronews.ca/hesays

I'm concerned about the federal budget, which is fortunate because the more concerned I am about something, the easier it is to reach my word count.

As I write this, journalists are using all their skills (begging *and* whining) to get "government sources" to reveal budget details before today's official announcement. But I know how it will go:

1) Finance Minister Jim Flaherty will explain that the budget is a fiscally conservative plan (except for the prisons and jets part) and that it will create jobs (except for the jobs-cuts part), and that it shows that Canadians have a bright future (except that we're one step away from DOOM and only the Conservatives can protect us).

2) The opposition leaders will, using talking points they wrote three weeks ago, explain that Flaherty has the same moral standing as, say, Satan, and that the budget document is the worst thing they've read since Twilight.

3) The opposition will vote for it anyway.

I don't know about you, but this era of deep cuts is starting to get me down.

RENE JOHNSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE

There's the world economic collapse, where countries like Greece decide they can't have nice things anymore and burn them.

There's provincial woes, where places like Ontario have budget speeches that read like eulogies.

And in Toronto, where I live, the only thing approaching economic good news is when sports fans win free pizza because the Raptors score 100 points. (Rumour has it the Leafs have a similar promotion, but it's been lost to the mists of time).

It's getting to the point where we should really give up on the tradition of finance ministers buying new shoes on budget day. Instead, he or she should pose for newspapers with a nice, shiny axe.

I'm trying to take a pragmatic, level-headed approach to the cuts, which is why I offer the following advice to Mr. Flaherty. Forgive me if this is trite, but I think the government should — this is important, write it down — wear a lot of jackets.

I'll explain. I, like Canada itself, am in debt up to my earmuffs. But I just made some money back, as I do every spring, because I pulled out a spring jacket and discovered a crisp $5 bill. Pretty sweet.

Clearly, all MPs should carry the federal coffers in their jacket pockets. Then wait till next spring and reap the surprise windfall.

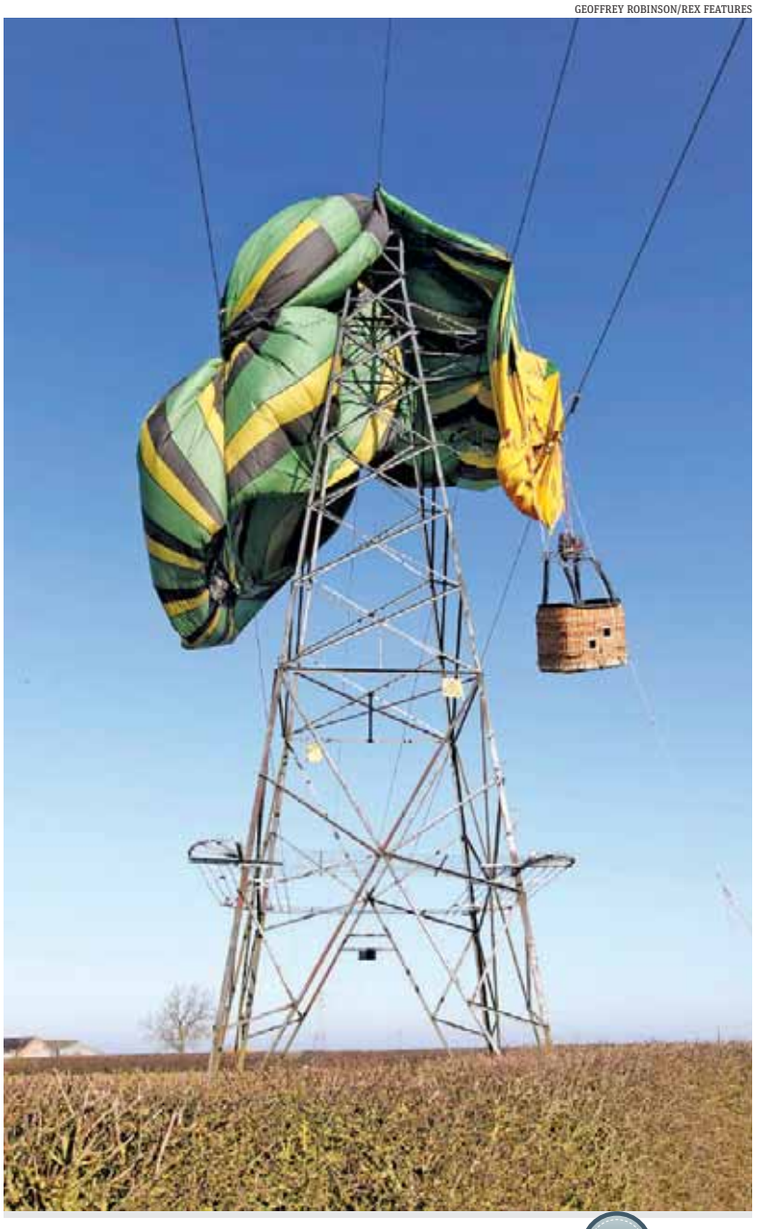
This works so well for me that I'm thinking about getting more jackets to increase my return. I'm pretty sure Ben Bernanke does this as well.

Frankly, Mr. Flaherty, I see this as our only hope. If you don't agree, I'll be deeply concerned. At least until I hit my word count.

Now.

What goes up...

GEOFFREY ROBINSON/REX FEATURES



Off course

Teen pilot flies balloon into pylon

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, U.K. Three people were saved by rescue crews after a hot-air balloon dramatically crashed into 132,000-volt power cables. Freakish winds sent teen pilot Adam Griffiths and his two companions toward overhead lines near the village of Bozeat, some 100 kilometres north-west of London. **MWN**

Hanging on a wire

"There was a bang and a little bit of a fire in the basket, but it put itself out as I went to grab the extinguisher. We slid down the power line and came to a standstill."

PILOT ADAM GRIFFITHS,
WHO SUFFERED MINOR BURNS

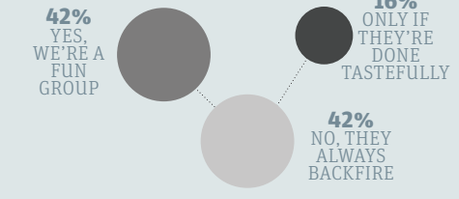
Hot-air boom

- **By the numbers:** The trio were dangling from the overhead lines 13 metres above the ground for five hours, while emergency teams worked to switch off power lines.
- **How they passed the time:** The stranded balloonists played I Spy as they waited to be rescued. "But after we had 'g' for 'grass' and 'p' for 'pylon' we didn't have many more ideas," Griffiths said.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Do you do any April Fool's Day pranks at your work?



Twitter

@trevorloveskd: Glad to see the canucks kick off This Is Our Home, hopefully it'll make a difference this year! #canucks #vancouver

@lsg1: We Are All Canucks and This Is Our Home. Meh... Doesn't really get u fired up, but I guess that was our downfall last time #Pun-Intentional

@thismason: sucks they have to do this at all. RT @VanCanucks: Our City. Together. This Is Our Home.

@kyleberndt: I like the 'It's Our Home' campaign from the #Canucks but I'm sad they even have to tell us in the first place.

@passittobulis: I like the "This is our Home" campaign, but I wish the #Canucks went w/ the original tag, "FFS we shouldn't have to ask you not to riot."

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Ignore the trash and add a little culture to your spring

Arts. There is a full slate of shows — from comedy to ballet — coming to Vancouver

BACKSTAGE PASS
Graeme McRanor
vancouver@metronews.ca

Amanda Green and Harrison James in Svengali, a new work from the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. SUBMITTED

Hear that, downtown Vancouver? It's spring and suddenly the streets are alive with the sound of … people barfing behind the Roxy.

Yes, friends, with warmer weather comes inebriated fools sans jackets, singing, screaming and, unfortunately, shout-puking in the alley behind Vancouver's not-so-highfalutin hub of hedonism.

Now I don't want to throw the Roxy under the bus, but its rear door does seem to be ground zero for the aforementioned shout-puking — a geographical phenomenon caused by an unholy trinity of boisterous bars, belligerent drunks and big buildings — a perfect storm I've mentioned previously in this very column.

Perhaps this urban epidemic isn't exclusive to the alley behind Granville Street, but, since it's just an egg's-throw from my loft, it's one that directly affects my sanity.

It's almost enough to drive a city lad into suburbia.

Luckily there are plenty of arts events taking place in the coming month, which should keep me safely out of the hot zone.

Too many to list in this space, really. But here are some random highlights I may check out:

Good weather, bad vibes

With warmer weather comes inebriated fools sans jackets, singing, screaming and, unfortunately, shout-puking in the alley behind Vancouver's not-so-highfalutin hub of hedonism.

Jay Mohr (March 30 at the River Rock Show Theatre in Richmond)

From the trenches of SNL to a sleazy agent in Jerry Maguire, Mohr has done it all. He's written a couple of memoirs, hosted a sports show, hosts his own podcast, the list goes on and on. Check him out. You (probably) won't be disappointed.

Soweto Gospel Choir (April 7 at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre)

This group has collaborated with a lengthy list of music icons and have taken home two Grammy Awards — no doubt they'll have you clapping your hands, tapping your feet and maybe even envisioning a ride across the Kalahari in an air-conditioned Land Rover on a five-star safari.

Svengali (April 20 to 22 at the Centre in Vancouver for Performing Arts)

A new work from the Royal Winnipeg Ballet inspired by a film treatment by Canadian director Guy Maddin. Choreographed Mark Godden, the CBC called it "beautiful, challenging and a visual turn-on." Sold!

Beat Nation: Art, Hip Hop and Aboriginal Culture (Runs until June 3 at the Vancouver Art Gallery)

A juxtaposition of urban youth culture and Aboriginal identity, the artists involved in the exhibition use various forms of pop culture to "create surprising new cultural hybrids — in painting, sculpture, installation, performance and video — that reflect the changing demographics of Aboriginal people today."

Sounds cool.

2 SCENE

Scene in brief

Robin Gibb undergoes surgery

Bee Gees star Robin Gibb has undergone further surgery following a sustained illness, a publicist said Wednesday. Gibb is recovering in the hospital after intestinal surgery over the weekend and has been forced to cancel a number of commitments, publicist Doug Wright said. Gibb, 62, was hospitalized late last year for stomach and colon problems, but told the BBC last month he was making a good recovery. He did not disclose the nature of his illness, but said a growth on his colon had been removed.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On the Web

Canadian DJ Deadmau5, Madonna declare a truce on Twitter

"Many authors know how to make the hairs on the back of your neck stand up. Jo Nesbo's one of the few who keeps them there."
— Linwood Barclay

"Once you read Nesbo you're hooked."
— The Chronicle Herald

"Nesbo writes rings around Larsson."
— Toronto Star

"Maddeningly addictive."
— Vanity Fair

Discuss #JoNesbo on Twitter | Available wherever books and e-books are sold

RANDOM HOUSE CANADA

Showing some love to La Belle Ville

TV. Celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain loves Montreal's 'uniquely crazy' food

When celebrity chef Anthony Bourdain was compiling his list of international cities to feature on the TV show The Layover, Montreal was a no-brainer for inclusion.

That's because the city's cuisine is "uniquely crazy, uniquely individualistic and rugged and excessive and wonderful," according to the New York City native.

"It says Canada to me," he added during a recent telephone interview.

The premise behind the The Layover was simple but highly challenging: Bourdain spent between 24 and 48 hours in each of 10 cities and packed in as much hard living as the liver and the rest of his body could take.

Viewers are taken off the beaten track as Bourdain, who has also written several books and stars in Anthony Bourdain: No Reservations, shows them where to visit and where to stay around the globe.

The Montreal episode also includes debate on whether its bagels are better than New York's, as well as adventures involving dragon boats and surfing on the St. Lawrence River.

"We were looking to do something fast and different, and a little scary, something that challenged and pushed us," says the 55-year-old.

But was it fun?

"Most of the time," is his immediate reply.

"It was difficult. Essentially, it's eight days of serious eating and drinking compressed into two (for the purposes of) the show.

"That's tough. It was very physically demanding and a little intimidating, a little frightening to embark on a bold new venture like that, especially when you're eating and drinking as much as I was."

The series has aired in the United States and gets its Canadian debut on Travel + Escape on April 11. The Montreal episode is set for broadcast May 2.

Bourdain has fond memories of Montreal dating back to a book tour in 2001 when local chefs took him under their wing.

"I knew we could make a good show there and have a good time doing it. It's my favourite city in Canada.

"I love the chefs there," he says, ringing off the names of Martin Picard (Au Pied de Cochon) Normand Laprise (Toque) Frederic Morin and David McMillan (both Joe Beef) as some of the outstanding ones.

"It's the most uniquely Canadian food in Canada. In Vancouver the cuisine is a very strong mix of great Asian food from all over Asia, a lot of great homegrown stuff, but the cuisine in Montreal could exist nowhere else other than Quebec.

"It looks and tastes different from food anywhere else and the chefs, particularly when you're talking about Martin or Fred or Dave, are unlike chefs anywhere else."

Bourdain has plans to do another season of The Layover this summer and Canada's largest city will be getting in on the fare.

"Toronto will be on the list for sure," he says of a city he has visited several times but never featured on any of his shows.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Layover

- The other cities where Bourdain lived large for the series were New York ("the greatest city in the world," he says unabashedly), Singapore, Hong Kong, Miami, London, Rome, Amsterdam, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

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sp: metro ski
Photo provided by Cypress Mountain

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

Justin Bieber

Bieber's phone prank lands him in hot water again

Justin Bieber's latest Twitter antics are causing him some legal trouble.

Bieber posted a random phone number — minus the final digit — and wrote: "Call me right now."

Two Texas residents reportedly received more than 1,000 phone calls and are now suing the Canadian pop star for damages due to "reckless behaviour," according to Hollyscoop.

What kind of damages are we talking about? Millions? No.

They're reportedly after tickets to a Bieber concert, an apology and an endorsement of an online business run by one of the plaintiffs, among other things.

Twitter

@ParisHilton
At the airport about to take off to Sydney! Haven't been to Australia in a long time, so I'm very excited for this trip! Love it there!

@jimmyfallon
I once was talked into getting a perm. (I was in college & it was free.)

@katyperry
don't believe in the hype.

@SethMacFarlane
There's nothing more grungy-looking than a red-headed person in a '70s movie.

The Word

She's a smooth operator. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

What is going on with Bethenny Frankel's marriage?

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

There are few reality TV stars who know how to game the system as well as Bethenny Frankel.

Her ambition is awe-inspiring: She's risen from a throwaway contestant on 2005's The Apprentice: Martha Stewart, to, despite not being married, one of the original five "housewives" on The Real Housewives of New York City.

From there, she wrote several New York Times bestselling books, starred in two spin-offs, Bethenny Getting Married? and Bethenny Ever After, and founded the company Skinnygirl Cocktails, which she sold last year for an alleged $120 million dollars.

But is she so driven that she's letting her marriage to husband Jason Hoppy suffer?

That's what In Touch is reporting. They say that Hoppy has moved out of their New York City apartment and is staying at a nearby hotel. They report that Hoppy is claiming he ditched the $5 million Tribeca condo he shares with Frankel and their 23-month-old daughter, Bryn, because of renovations.

But a source thinks he also left because he's fed up with Bethenny's diva behaviour.

"The fighting has gotten worse," the source tells In Touch.

Apparently, Frankel has become overly obsessed with the launch of her L.A.-based talk show.

"Her energy has been nervous and neurotic," the source says. "He can't take it anymore, so he's been doing everything on his own."

Or, this drama could just be fabricated in order for fans to train their attention back on Frankel in time for her talk show, set to launch in September.

She's witchy that way.

Lindsay Lohan

Lindsay Lohan facing another legal battle

With her probation set to end today, Lindsay Lohan is bracing as another legal battle heats up.

Thaer Kamal has reportedly handed over surveillance footage he claims shows the actress hitting him with her car and then driving away outside a Hollywood hookah lounge, according to Radar Online. And Kamal's lawyers may be interested in more than just a hit-and-run investigation, as reports recently surfaced that Kamal has a history of insurance fraud, something he vehemently denies.

"Thaer feels that Lindsay's camp has bullied him by making up stories that he was being investigated for insurance fraud," a source says. "(His lawyers) will be investigating who made those false statements about Thaer being the focus of insurance fraud investigations and will take the appropriate legal action against those responsible for the false and defamatory comments if necessary."

Megan Fox

Megan Fox rumoured to be pregnant

After answering a slew of parenting-related questions while promoting Friends with Kids, Megan Fox is reportedly expecting her first child with husband Brian Austin Green, according to Star magazine.

"They just found out," a source claims, "And are incredibly excited."

The happy couple won't be sharing the news just yet, though, the source warns. "It's still early, so they are only telling close friends and family members."

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3 LIFE

Fashion flash

Emerging icon

The Hunger Games star Jennifer Lawrence is not only replacing Kristen Stewart as Hollywood's most popular teen heroine, but she's out dressing her too. And that Vogue cover will be coming in three, two...

Attention needed

Katy Perry and Karl Lagerfeld's man, Baptiste Giabiconi, have been "sneaking" around for all the paparazzi to "catch." Yawn and snore. We think Baptiste did a better acting job in those Magnum commercials.

Shoe lift

Espadrilles are a vacation staple, but colour-blocked flats demand to be seen on the city streets as well. It's all about yellow ankle straps, which lift the shoe miles above the $10 ones you scored in Spain.

METRO WORLD NEWS

On the Web

Everyday glamour — a la 'Gatsby' — returns as favourite fashion look for spring.

Trend of the week: white vs. floral brights

Fashion fight. Which trend will win in this spring style dust-up?

KENYA HUNT
Metro World News in London

Forget about the magazines for a second, and let's talk about the trends that women are actually wearing.

When it comes to updating your wardrobe for spring, there seems to be two schools of thought emerging on the street.

In the right corner: Team White. This is a look that is painfully easy to pull off (hurrah) and reliably chic.

A win-win, no? The trick is to wear it head-to-toe — like, ivory trousers and a matching blazer as a fashion forward update on the work suit or white shorts and a coordinating button-down as a light way to ease into spring.

Just don't eat any condiments with your lunch that day.

Head-to-toe white in London... MICHELLE BOBB-PARRIS

And in Paris. KARL-EDWIN GUERRE

Bright florals spotted on the street in Paris... GIIA TONICS

And in Milan. GIIA TONICS

And in the left: Team Floral Brights — a look that was adopted by practically every fashion editor during last month's ready-to-wear shows. You can take the whole-hog approach by mixing them in different colour ways and layering them on generously or just dip one toe into the trend pool by limiting the print to a single pair of jeans or a skirt—the bolder the colour, the better.

Team White

H&M

Leather vest
$199, HM.COM

Team White

Mango

Tailored trouser
$63, ASOS.COM

Team Floral Brights

Carin Wester

Blouse
$150 PIXIEMARKET.COM

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IN THIS HECTIC MODERN WORLD, TWITTER HAS BECOME A COOL AND SUCCINCT WAY OF COMMUNICATING. IT ALLOWS ME TO BE ACCESSIBLE, INSTANTLY SPEAK MY MIND, AND CONNECTS ME WITH ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE. WHETHER IT'S A FASHION QUESTION OR YOU JUST WANT TO COMMENT ON LIFE'S BIGGER PICTURE, I'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU.

@Jeanne_Beker: How many prs of shoes does one really need to take on a beach vacation? Flip flops, sneakers, wedges, stilettos.. + how many of each? Arghh!

@Joanna242
Leave the sneakers behind and pack a couple of extra pairs of sexy sandals...
@Jeanne_Beker
But what if I want to hit the tennis court? Or go for a sail???

@jamillahross
Barbados is very fashionable. I'd pack more shoes, not less.
@Jeanne_Beker
Good advice!!!

@Jeanne_Beker: Overlooking The Crane beach...out for a pre-dinner cocktail with @qualityslippers + @joeyoneil

@Jeanne_Beker:Barbados: Heaven on earth! My terrace at The Crane. Savouring EVERY second. And I just got here!!!

@Jeanne_Beker: Just been offered a rum punch at 9:30 am! Where else but on a Catamaran "Cool Runnings" cruise?

@sarahleeswagger
try pasoã, it will electrify your taste buds - i promise.

@DanielRWilson
I trust you said yes. Only to be polite, really.

@fashionNE
I would kill for some of that rum punch right now, feels like a Monday morning here in the real world

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METRO SPACES
Thursday, March 29, 2012

Modern estate-style architecture gives Clayton Rise homes in Cloverdale a feel of "Cape Cod, East Coast meets Yaletown," says Lesley Bidlake, marketing manager at Townline, the development company for Clayton Rise. CONTRIBUTED

Climb up to your hilltop kingdom

Clayton Rise. Community rests on a gentle hill that is the highest point of Cloverdale

STEPHANIE ORFORD
For Metro

From the palace of Versailles to the legendary castle of Camelot, there is a reason hilltops are royalty's habitation of choice.

Luckily, lofty living isn't exclusive to bluebloods. It's just what Clayton Rise, a Cloverdale townhome development, is offering its homebuyers.

The community is a head above the rest on a gentle hill that's the highest point in Cloverdale, with views of Mount Baker and the Fraser Valley.

"You can feel the elevation when you're there," said Chris Colbeck, VP of sales and marketing at Townline, the developer. The hill imbues the homes with an extra feeling of openness.

On the third, topmost floor of Clayton Rise homes, residents have a view across Cloverdale, said Lesley Bidlake, marketing manager at Townline, the development company. Modern estate-style architecture gives the homes a feel of "Cape Cod, East Coast meets Yaletown," said Bidlake.

The home's interiors are designed to maximize space and natural light. The clean, understated decorating schemes at Clayton Rise are "a little bit different from what everyone else was offering," said Colbeck.

Interior details include wide plank wood laminate flooring, quartz countertops, Frigidaire and Samsung appliances, porcelain and ceramic tiling, Berber carpeting on stairs and in bedrooms and chrome accents.

The development's design has won it a place as a finalist for this April's 2012 Ovation Awards in the category of best multi-family development less than 2,000 square feet.

The homes also include green features like flow-wise toilets, energy efficient "low-E" windows, and 100 per cent recycled carpet underlay.

The 143-home community's green appeal extends outdoors, as well.

Interior details in Clayton Rise homes include wide plank wood laminate flooring, quartz countertops, and porcelain and ceramic tiling. CONTRIBUTED

The homes are swathed in manicured green space, and a network of footpaths criss-crosses the greenways for easy pedestrian access.

Since the development is pedestrian friendly, naturally it's dog friendly, too. A watering station for dogs on the property helps bring canine-lovers together.

Across the street is a small, pedestrian friendly retail area, including dry cleaning services, a locally owned convenience store, and what is reportedly the best pizza place in town. It's a short walk away — useful for grabbing last-minute ingredients or midnight snacks.

Elementary schools, grocery shopping, parks, entertainment, golf and other services are a short drive away.

For those who want to stay closer to home for community get-togethers and entertainment, Clayton Rise is equipped with a roomy clubhouse for residents.

The new clubhouse has already hosted everything from bachelorettes to hockey parties.

Residents can work out in the fitness centre, relax by the communal fireplace, hold a tournament in the games room, catch a flick in the theatre, or get some sun while the kids tire themselves out in the outdoor pool.

"It's a very family-social environment," said Colbeck. "You walk into this community and you can sense the neighbourhood feel."

Meet the development

- **Development:** Clayton Rise
- **Rooms:** Two- and three-bedroom homes with two to two-and-a-half bathrooms — 14 floor plans to choose from
- **Area:** 1,336 to 1,060 square feet
- **Price:** $282,900 to $334,900
- **Location:** Near 192nd Street and 72nd Ave in Cloverdale
- **Builders:** Townline Group of Companies
- **Status:** Now selling with 46 homes left, some move-in ready. Duplexes for sale in about two months.
- **Website:** claytonrise.com

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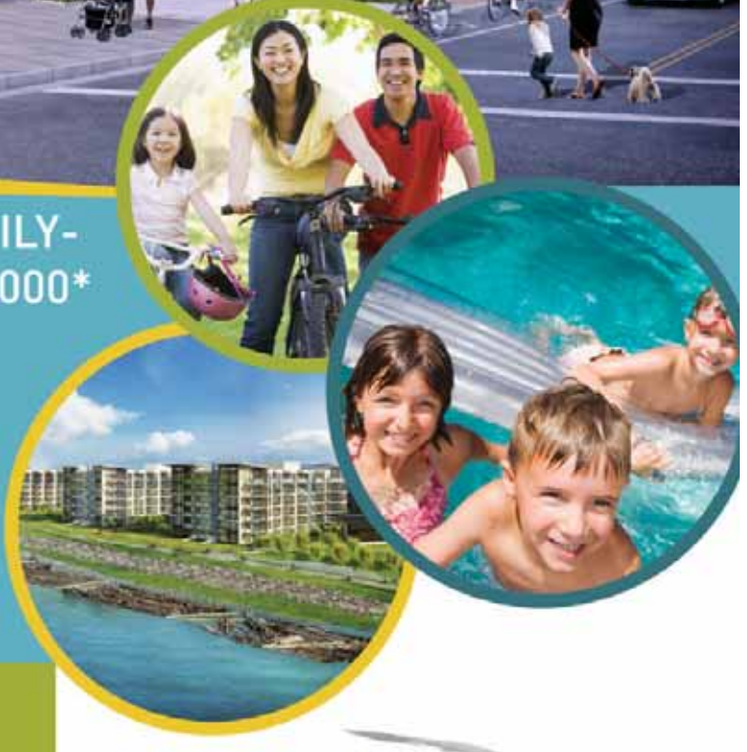

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DAVA DEVELOPMENTS ORIS

Finding the perfect first home

ON THE MARKET

David and Mara Bloomberg are newlyweds and are eagerly searching for their first home together.

Being a couple in their mid-20s and both only a few years into their new careers, they realize they can't afford a large home. For this reason they are seeking a small, one-bedroom condominium in the downtown Vancouver core that puts them close to work, friends and all the entertainment they desire.

Their budget maxes out at $320,000, so a unit in which some cosmetic renovations are required will be acceptable. On the other hand, major renovations are not appealing to either.

RYAN DELUCA IS A REAL ESTATE AGENT WITH SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL REALTY CANADA.

704-1212 Howe St. — Vancouver
$309,900
Just at the edge of the entertainment district, this one-bedroom, one-bathroom unit encompasses 405 square feet. Although on the smaller side, both David and Mara appreciate that the building is newer and requires absolutely no renovations or updating. Stainless steel appliances, granite countertops, and in suite laundry are items the Bloombergs never thought they could afford. Listing agent Charlie Kim of Rennie & Associates Realty also points out that the building sits atop one of the largest gyms in downtown Vancouver.

708-1330 Hornby St. — Vancouver
$309,000
At 616 square feet, this one-bedroom, one-bathroom at Hornby Place is also on the edge of the Bloomberg's desired neighbourhood. Because this home requires a few cosmetic updates to the kitchen and bathrooms, this larger unit gives David and Mara extra space and still falls within their price point. A large balcony with an east-facing view means morning sun and a perfect spot for that "wake-me-up" coffee. According to Will Pratt and Michael Wilcox of Royal LePage City Centre, "This is an exceptionally well maintained and reputable concrete building with new elevators, plumbing and a newer roof."

807-668 Citadel Parade St. — Vancouver
$299,000
Built in 2007, this 483-square-foot condo in Spectrum sits at the opposite corner of the Bloomberg's desired location from the other units. With one bedroom, one bathroom and added den, this home has great appeal to Mara since she can use the den as a home office. An open balcony offers plenty of room for barbeques and entertaining and all the modern finishes mean this couple will have no renovations to complete. In suite laundry, stunning bathrooms, a beautiful kitchen and fantastic amenities, including an indoor pool, round off this home listed by Darrell Pernisie of Re/Max Real Estate Services.

Bits & Bites. An ovation for housing excellence

PETER SIMPSON
For Metro

The finalists for the third annual Ovation Awards have been announced by the Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association (GVHBA). The awards recognize excellence in new home and renovation design, construction, accessibility, sustainability, affordability, energy efficiency and heritage restoration.

Expert judges from outside the Metro Vancouver region selected the finalists in 41 categories. Topping the list are Kenorah Construction & Design (15 finalist placements), ParkLane Homes (13), My House Design/Build Team (nine), Intermind Design (eight), Portrait Homes (seven), and G. Wilson Construction (six).

Presenting sponsor is FortisBC. Patron sponsor is the Homeowner Protection Office, branch of BC Housing.

Winners will be announced April 28 at the Ovation Awards gala in Vancouver. Visitgvhba.org/ovationawards for the list of finalists and links to their websites.

Digital generation
I recently had an opportunity recently to attend a presentation by Mitch Joel, one of the top 100 online marketers in the world.

Three statements Joel made resonated with the audience. Today's children will grow up in a world without a keyboard or mouse; 84 per cent of consumers are likely to check online reviews prior to making a purchase; and more grandparents than high school students are on Facebook.

Geez, I need to catch up — I'm still having a hard time saying goodbye to my three-inch floppy disks.

Help for first-timers
With mortgage rates at historical lows, many young men and women, with a little help from the Bank of Mom & Dad, are stepping onto the first rung of the homeownership ladder.

But first they need a little help to de-mystify the process, which can be somewhat daunting for neophytes. More than 500 people have registered for the GVHBA's 18th annual free first-time homebuyer seminar April 3 at the Bell Performing Arts Centre in Surrey.

Major sponsors are the Homeowner Protection Office and RBC Royal Bank.

Be an informed home buyer. Register online at gvhba.org or call 778-565-4288.

PETER SIMPSON IS THE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER OF THE GREATER VANCOUVER HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION. EMAIL HIM AT PETER@GVHBA.ORG.

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Triple Whammy

Trio. Condo development is clean and modern, close amenities with sense of neighbourhood

STEPHANIE ORFORD
For Metro

Trio's design sets it apart, says Diane Lu, marketing and sales manager for the condo development, with 10 floor plans to choose from. CONTRIBUTED

Some of the greatest things about Vancouver you can't find downtown. For a lot of the city's best Vietnamese food, for instance, Kingsway is the place to be.

It's one of the many features that are drawing first-time homebuyers away from places like Yaletown and Kitsilano, toward East Van, according to Diane Luu, the marketing and sales manager for Trio, a new condo development on Commercial Street at Kingsway.

Trio is the new kid on the block that isn't afraid to march to a different drum, said Luu.

"Trio is nothing like what Kingsway has to offer right now," she said. "We've kind of stepped out of the norm a little bit."

The architecture is clean and modern, the amenities are close and there is a sense of neighbourhood culture, all minus the downtown prices. It's a triple whammy that has attracted buyers without much advertising, and even without a presentation suite. About 40 per cent of the units are already sold.

Trio's design particularly sets it apart, said Luu. The floor plans were laid out to be super space efficient — there are 10 plans to choose from.

"We left the spaces as open as possible," she explained. Floor-to-ceiling windows let in lots of light.

The developers, Vanlux Development and Elegant Development, didn't skimp on the interiors. If it's any indication of the development's quality, there is no vinyl flooring used in the entire building, said Luu.

Professional interior design firm Lot 30 selected all interior finishes and appliances, including quartz composite countertops, dual flush toilets, chrome hardware and Grohe faucets, stainless steel kitchen appliances, laminate flooring, and porcelain tile.

The south-facing residences have roomy balconies arranged in steps, so that each unit has a larger balcony than the apartment above. At about 80 to 180 square feet, the balconies are perfect for hosting a summer barbecue.

Trio consists of four floors and will be a multi-use building once it opens in fall 2012. Shops will occupy the main floor, with three floors of wood-frame condos above and two levels of underground parking below.

The good selection of neighbourhood restaurants gives residents some mouth-wateringly diverse choices. Get a gluten-free veggie burger at The Tipper or hot wings and beer at Cedar Cottage Pub (a neighbourhood institution), all within walking distance.

People of diverse backgrounds and ages have gravitated to Trio. They are mainly first-time purchasers, said Luu, many of whom come from areas closer to the downtown core.

"People are branching out to this area because of the affordability," she said.

Meet the condo

- **Development:** Trio
- **Size:** One- and two-bedroom condos from 595 to 953 square feet
- **Price:** $259,900 to $459,900 (for two-bedroom penthouse)
- **Location:** 4338 Commercial St. at the corner of Kingsway in Vancouver
- **Builders:** Vanlux Development, Elegant Development Inc.
- **Architect:** Wilson Chang Architect Inc.
- **Status:** Now selling (18 units left)
- **Website:** trioliving.ca

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1706-1189 Melville St. — Coal Harbour
Listed: $518,000
Sold: $508,000
Type: Condominium
This 710-square-foot unit sits in the trendy neighbourhood of Coal Harbour. With one bedroom and one bathroom spread over 710 square feet, there is no lack of space in this home. A gourmet kitchen with granite counters, stainless steel appliances and a gas cooktop are just some of the modern finishings found here. Stunning views can be enjoyed from the floor-to-ceiling windows and large balcony overlooking the water and Stanley Park. Listing agent Bruce Gibson of Century 21 In Town Realty says this premiere address also comes with resort-like facilities including an outdoor pool and spa.

708-168 Powell St. — Downtown Vancouver East
Listed: $389,800
Sold: $372,500
Type: Condominium
With one bedroom and one bathroom in 645 square feet, this unit in the three-year-old Smart building sold in less than one month. The expansive mountain and city views from the 243-square-foot balcony make a perfect spot for entertaining or relaxing on a warm summer day. This unit includes a European style linear kitchen, bamboo laminate flooring, and frosted glass doors to the bedroom. Located just steps from all the shops, restaurants and bars of Gastown, this home is at the centre of it all. David Reimers of Royal LePage Coronation West also points out that renowned designers Busby Perkins & Will designed this boutique building.

3311 Carriage Ct. — Coquitlam
Listed: $749,800
Sold: $743,000
Type: Detached house
On the market for merely 13 days, this seven-bedroom, five-bathroom house in the Park Ridge Estates neighbourhood of Coquitlam was a quick sale. With 3,582 square feet of living space, listing agent Jeff Pennington of Re/Max All Points Realty Group says the house has four bedrooms up and three bedrooms down. The entire house has been freshly repainted and is immaculately maintained. Just minutes from Coquitlam Centre, the aquatic centre and a host of recreational facilities, this home is in a prime location for family fun. **RYAN DELUCA**

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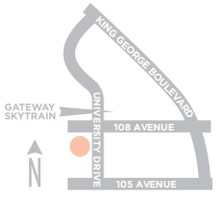

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Charles the butler. Sometimes a lot of hot air can be a great thing

CHARLES THE BUTLER
askcharlesthebutler@metronews.ca
For more, visit charlesmacpherson.com

Dear Charles the butler, I believe I saw you on television one day speaking about dry cleaning vs. steaming and how steam cleaning is better for a suit, pants, etc...unless they have a stain in which case they should go to the dry cleaners.

I want to buy a steamer (as both myself and my husband wear suits to work every day). I have been doing some research but am not sure which machine I should get. Do you recommend one over another?

I look forward to hearing from you and am very appreciative of any advice you can give me.
Thank you,
Shawn Hamilton

Dear Shawn,

Yes, I do very much advocate steaming natural fibre clothing on a regular basis. It takes out the wrinkles, relaxes the fibres and removes odours as the steam kills bacteria. Steaming a suit regularly is a good thing!

I can honestly say that I love the steamer from Jiffy 2000 Company. I use this machine both in the butler school and in my home. You can buy one at Amazon.ca or at Jiffysteamer.com, or buy it directly from the company in Toronto called Wm. Prager Ltd. on Adelaide Street West. They ship all across Canada.

Finally, once you have your Jiffy Steamer you will need to know how to use it, and, luckily, the company has some great videos on their website.

My advice is to buy a commercial brand steamer (such as the one I mentioned above) because, from my experience, they work better and last longer.

Happy steaming!
Charles the butler

HAVE A QUESTION? SEND AN EMAIL TO ASKCHARLESTHEBUTLER@METRONEWS.CA

Steam your way into cleanliness. ISTOCK IMAGES

Shake up your fave comfort foods with new ingredients

Sweet Potato and Sausage Shepherd's Pie. This dish combines elements of the classic and some new tasty additions

Some people are adamant about keeping dishes like Shepherd's Pie traditional.

For those who are not, this version uses corn, a thick bed of mashed sweet potatoes, a sausage base and some lean ground beef for good measure.

The result is savoury and sweet in just the right balance.

1. Heat oven to 200 C (400 F). Lightly oil a standard loaf pan.

2. Place sweet potatoes in a large pot and add enough water to cover by 2.5 cm (1 inch). Bring to a boil and cook until tender, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, in a large skillet over high, combine olive oil, garlic and onion. Sauté for 5 minutes or until just tender.

3. Add sausage, beef and pepper. Sauté until meat is browned and cooked through, about 8 minutes. Add beer and simmer until reduced by half, about 4 minutes.

4. In a small glass, mix cornstarch with cool water. Add cornstarch mixture to meat and stir until thickened. Remove from heat.

5. Spread meat and onion mixture evenly in loaf pan. In a small bowl, mix corn kernels and creamed corn, then spread in an even layer over meat. Set aside.

6. Once the sweet potatoes have cooked, drain and return them to the pot. Add the milk, butter and brown sugar, then mash potatoes until smooth. Season with salt.

7. Spoon the potatoes evenly over corn. Bake for 35 minutes or until the potatoes are lightly browned at the edges.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ingredients

- 2 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 250 g (1/2 lb) loose Italian sausage meat
- 250 g (1/2 lb) lean ground beef
- 1 ml (1/4 tsp) black pepper
- 175 ml (6 oz) stout or other dark beer (about half a bottle)
- 22 ml (1 1/2 tbsp) cornstarch
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) cool water
- 1 can (398 ml/14 oz) corn kernels, drained
- 1 small can (about 245 ml/8 1/4 oz) creamed corn
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) milk
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) butter
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) brown sugar
- Salt, to taste

Sweet Potato and Sausage Shepherd's Pie

This recipe serves six. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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M
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The good old Ham & Cheese sandwich gets bistro-like makeover

This recipe serves six. THE CANADIAN PRESS H/O

Chef Melissa Craig of the Bearfoot Bistro in Whistler, B.C., created this delicious grilled cheese sandwich for a recent competition in Toronto.

"My favourite comfort food of all time is grilled cheese," she says. "I like a simple grilled cheese with ketchup.

"However, I decided to put a twist and make a tomato tapenade with some spicy arugula for a meal or a snack any time of the day or night."

1. Chop together tomatoes, olives, garlic and capers. Place in a bowl. Slowly add olive oil, stir in Parmesan and finish seasoning with fresh pepper. Set tapenade aside.

2. Preheat grill to low heat. Slice ciabatta bread straight across into round disks about 1 cm (1/2 inch) thick.

3. Assemble each sandwich with Swiss cheese, ham and arugula. Lightly brush both sides of bread with olive oil. Lightly grill each side of sandwich over very low heat. Remove from grill and place on plates with 5 ml (1 tsp) of tapenade on top.

DAIRY FARMERS OF CANADA, DAIRYGOODNESS.CA/RECIPES/HAM-GRILLED-CHEESE/EMILY RICHARDS (PROFESSIONAL HOME ECONOMIST, COOKBOOK AUTHOR, AND TV CELEBRITY CHEF. FOR MORE VISIT, EMILYRICHARDSCOOKS.CA)

Sandwich Tips

- **Make ahead.** Tapenade can be made up to one week ahead and may be served on top or on the side.
- **Swap it.** You could use prosciutto instead of ham.

Ingredients

- 1 rustic ciabatta bread
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) olive oil
- 250 g (8 oz) Swiss cheese
- 270 g (9 oz) smoked or Black Forest ham
- 1 bunch arugula leaves
- Cracked black pepper

Tapenade

- 60 g (2 oz) sun-dried tomatoes, soaked
- 30 g (1 oz) kalamata olives
- 1/2 clove garlic, chopped
- 15 ml (1 tbsp) capers
- 35 ml (25 ml/1/8 cup plus 10 ml/2 tsp) olive oil
- 30 ml (2 tbsp) Parmesan cheese

Cookbook of the Week

The One Dish Collection

There's nothing quite like classic comfort dishes. That's why food director Annabelle Waugh and the test kitchen staff at Canadian Livings magazine have released The One Dish Collection (Transcontinental Books, $26.95).

The book contains 183 recipes with 80 illustrations that came from staff members who remembered their favourite meals as youngsters growing up.

The recipes are split into the chapters: soups, stews, hearty salads, casseroles, skillets and simmers, and pastas and risottos. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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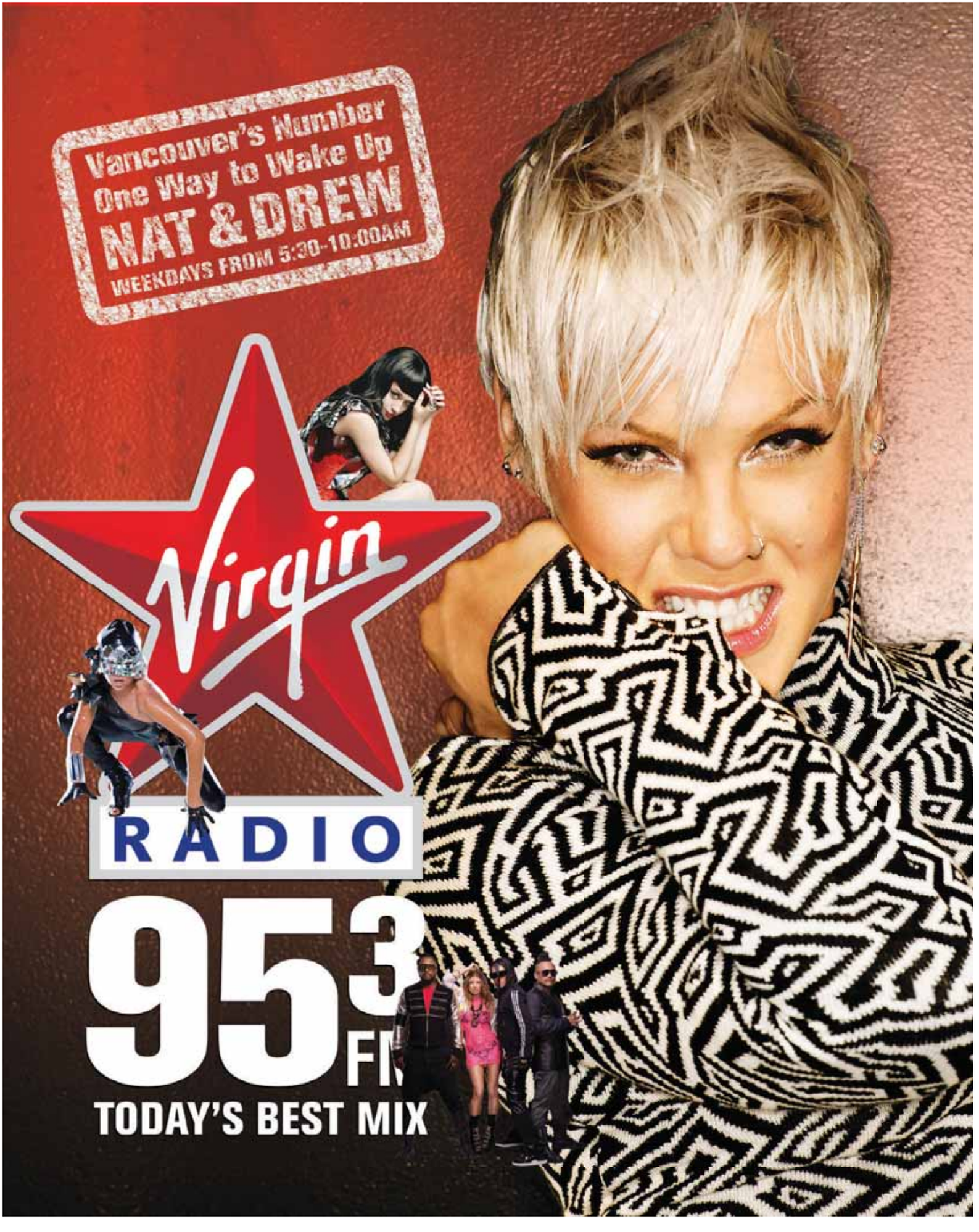
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TODAY'S BEST MIX

Schneider keeps everything out as Canucks top Avalanche

Vancouver's Cory Schneider collides with Colorado's Mark Olver on Wednesday night. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL. One goal is enough as backup netminder improves to 11-1-1 since Christmas

Chris Higgins scored shorthanded Wednesday and the Vancouver Canucks continued their domination of Colorado with a 1-0 victory over the fading Avalanche.

Higgins' goal came in the first period and was his third in four games against the Avalanche, who were stymied by goalie Cory Schneider's solid 43-save effort.

Schneider was helped by his defensive-minded teammates who kept many Colorado chances away from the centre of the ice.

In the third period, Schneider came across his crease to deny David Jones, who tried to convert Paul Stastny's rebound.

It was the second 1-0 win in as many games by the Canucks.

Schneider got his third shutout of the season while Roberto Luongo earned his fourth Monday against Los Angeles.

The victory was Vancouver's sixth in as many games this season over Colorado and left the Avalanche little margin for error as they chase a Western Conference playoff berth.

The Canucks (47-21-9) won their fourth-straight game to continue their pursuit of St. Louis for the overall lead in the NHL and the West.

Vancouver is two points behind the Blues and cannot finish lower than second in the conference.

The Avalanche (40-33-6) lost a fourth straight game and 15th in their last 17 outings against the Canucks.

They remain below the playoff bar in the West with only three games left in their regular season. Other teams in the hunt have games in hand.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

By the numbers

400

The Canucks filled the 18,890-seat Rogers Arena for the 400th consecutive game, including 43 playoff contests. Only baseball's Boston Red Sox and the NBA's Dallas Mavericks have longer active sellout streaks among North American sports franchises.

Ichiro still big in Japan as MLB opens season

Ichiro Suzuki gave his fans in Japan a performance to cheer about.

Suzuki had four hits in his return home, Dustin Ackley homered and singled in the go-ahead run in the 11th inning, and the Seattle Mariners beat the Oakland Athletics 3-1 Wednesday night in baseball's season opener in Tokyo.

"It was very special to open in Japan," said Suzuki, who spent nine seasons in Osaka with the Orix Blue Wave. "I wanted to have fun and give the fans something at this special time and wanted to share a special moment with them."

The capacity crowd of 44,227 at Tokyo Dome gave Suzuki a standing ovation when he took his position in right field in the final inning.

MLB and the players' association are using the series to assist rebuilding in Japan following last year's earthquake and tsunami.

Felix Hernandez combined with two relievers on a six-hitter as MLB opened its season in Tokyo for the fourth time.

Seattle and Oakland complete their two-game series Thursday. The rest of the big-league teams start to get going April 4, when the renamed Miami Marlins open their new ballpark against the World Series champion St. Louis Cardinals. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mariners right-fielder Ichiro Suzuki, right, celebrates with teammates in Tokyo on Wednesday. CHRIS MCGRATH/GETTY IMAGES

NBA. NCAA's best no match for Wiz: Van Gundy

Stan Van Gundy said Wednesday the notion that Kentucky could beat an NBA team is "absurd."

The Orlando Magic coach was asked about comments by former Maryland coach Gary Williams, who told a Washington radio station that he thought the Wildcats could beat the NBA's Wizards in one game at Rupp Arena.

The Wildcats, the favourites to win the NCAA title next week, have multiple players who are expected to be NBA lottery picks. That's not enough for Van Gundy.

"Look, it's absurd," he said before the Magic faced the New York Knicks. "I mean, people will say, 'Oh, Kentucky you know's got four NBA players.' Yeah, well the other team's got 13."

Stan Van Gundy. DEERING/GETTY IMAGES

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NBA

Raptors' Bargnani joins 6,000-point club

Andrea Bargnani reached a milestone by scoring 26 points in the Toronto Raptors' 105-96 victory over the Denver Nuggets on Wednesday. Bargnani came in 13 points shy of 6,000 career points, and reached the milestone with a free throw late in the second quarter.

He is the fourth player score 6,000 as a Raptor, joining Vince Carter, Chris Bosh and Morris Peterson. THE CANADIAN PRESS

MLB. Dodger fans hopeful with Magic on their side

Magic Johnson is about to learn $2 billion US only buys you so much. Now he'll need to bring the Los Angeles Dodgers the same success he brought the Lakers.

News Johnson and his partners agreed to purchase the team sparked a groundswell of excited chatter and optimism around Los Angeles Wednesday, renewing hope the man who ran "Showtime" could restore lustre to the once-proud franchise.

The amount Johnson and his partners are paying would be mind-blowing if it was just for the team itself.

Quoted

"As Magic used to say, the Dodgers were the team that used to run L.A. Definitely we're going to have more fans out there this year."

Matt Kemp, Dodgers centre-fielder

But it also gives Johnson's group the right to reel in future riches from TV and real estate associated with the Dodgers.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

4 SPORTS

Quoted

"We knew what his character was and what kind of guy he was going to be in the clubhouse. So that obviously came out the way it was expected. Omar just had a very good camp and he deserved to be on the team."

Toronto Blue Jays general manager Alex Anthopoulos on Omar Vizquel, who has played his way into another season in the majors. Boosted by an excellent showing in spring training, the backup infielder was added to the Blue Jays' roster Wednesday a month before his 45th birthday, making him the oldest active position player in the big leagues.

Final Four

Never too old to fight for their team

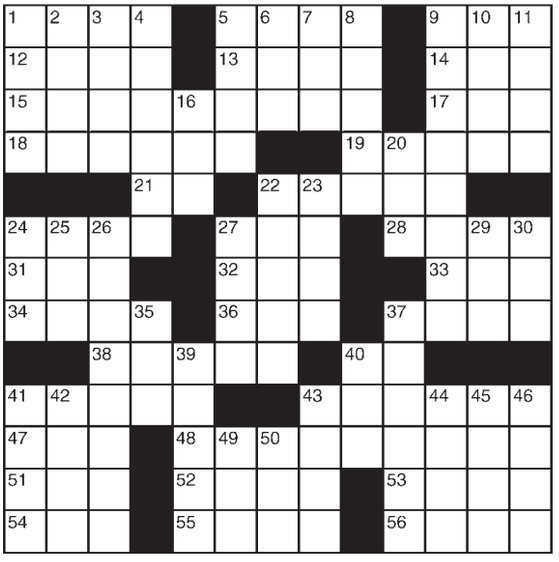
Authorities say the Kentucky-Louisville basketball rivalry boiled over at a Kentucky dialysis clinic when one patient punched another during an argument about the teams. Georgetown police Lt. Robert Swanigan says the altercation began Monday with a verbal exchange between the 68-year-old Kentucky fan and 71-year-old Louisville fan. The men were arguing over who will win when the teams meet in the Final Four on Saturday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On the web

LeBron James has a dislocated finger but, despite doctors' wishes, will take the floor for the Heat as the Dallas Mavericks return to Miami for the first time since winning the NBA championship last June at American Airlines Arena. Scan the code for the story.

Crossword



Across

1 Big bash
5 Virtue's opposite
9 Flop
12 Japanese sashes
13 Exotic berry
14 Compass dir.
15 With-drawing from office
17 "Cool" amount of cash
18 Ranking
19 Part of Hispaniola
21 Morning hour on a sundial
22 "Psycho" setting
24 Hospital furnishings
27 Space
28 Organization
31 Anger
32 Sailor's assent
33 "I" strain?
34 Tournament component
36 Leno's network
37 Wan
38 Reflec-tion
40 Pacino or Yankovic
41 Tangy cuisine
43 Ape
47 Yoko of music
48 "Ghost" co-star
51 To the — degree
52 Author Hunter
53 Pronto, in the ER
54 Family
55 Look for
56 Highland hats

Down

1 Pantheon figures
2 Help in a crime
3 Peru's capital
4 Unchanged
5 Cisterns
6 Here (Fr.)
7 Has the skill set
8 Square dance group
9 Cecil B. and Agnes
10 One
11 Sandwich shop
16 Formal wear
20 NRC predecessor
22 Perhaps
23 Oil cartel
24 Humongous
25 Geological time
26 Wicker-covered bottle
27 Group of hoods
29 "Yecch!"
30 Lad
35 Big Aussie bird
37 Not quite
39 South American range
40 Intention
41 Hit on the head
42 Oppositionist
43 Kitchen fixture
44 Greek vowel
45 Composer Khachaturian
46 Profits
49 Previous night
50 West of Holly wood

For today's crossword answers and for expanded horoscopes, go to metronews.ca

Yesterday's answer

O	P	U	S			S	E	E		A	B	I	T	
R	O	S	E			P	O	I		D	U	D	E	
B	U	S	T	L	I	N	G			I	S	L	E	
S	T	R	A	I	N			H	Y	P	H	E	N	
				T	R	A			T	O	O	N		
F	A	B			A	C	T			U	S	E	U	P
O	V	U	M			H	O	P			E	L	K	A
R	E	S	I	N			P	H	D			L	E	M
			T	R	O	D			R	E	S			
S	P	A	R	S	E			A	M	E	L	I	A	
A	R	G	O			B	U	S	I	N	E	S	S	
F	O	U	R			U	T	E			O	D	I	E
E	F	T	S			G	A	S			H	A	T	A

Sudoku

	2		7		4	6	8	
					2			1
7						4		5
	7		9			1	3	
				8				
	8	9			6		4	
9		6						7
2			3					
	5	1	2		9		6	

How to play

Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Yesterday's answer

1	7	6	8	2	9	3	4	5
2	3	9	5	6	4	8	7	1
8	5	4	1	7	3	2	9	6
3	9	1	2	4	7	5	6	8
4	6	5	6	9	1	7	3	2
7	6	2	3	8	5	9	1	4
9	2	7	4	5	6	1	8	3
6	1	8	9	3	2	4	5	7
5	4	3	7	1	8	6	2	9

Send a kiss

- **a who.** I always thought love was about who can make you smile, who can make you laugh when you dont want to laugh, who can make you cry and who can make you do things for them you may not want to do at the moment. guessing i was wrong? jenny
- **Campbell Soup.** You must be used to me crying, you know my heart cant take no more i wont keep running back to you. thinking about my strength to finally get up and leave seems like i finally got my head on straight. cant wait to wake up everyday without you on my brain.. oh well proud to say i will never make that same mistake!! No Name Soup
- **Fall-apart-ers.** Here's to all the fall-a-parters, jesus loves you! Blessings for everyone! Never too late?
- **All lies.** Why didnt i listen to my heart when he had me guessing from the start, more and more i wonder why do i still want her after all the love i gave her but it wasnt mutual soo whatever then. And everytime the phone rings i wish it was your call, but that wont happen. From gullible

Today 10°/6° Showers 40%
Friday 8°/5° Rain 90%
Know what the weather will be 14 days from now. Check the 14 day trend.
TWN incorporates MSC data

Horoscope

Aries | March 21 - April 20. Someone you meet will tell you something that may not mean much to you now, but it could be used to your benefit later on.

Taurus | April 21 - May 21. You will talk your way out of trouble today but how did you get into this position in the first place?

Gemini | May 22 - June 20. You need to convince someone that you know what you are talking about and that you are serious about your aims.

Cancer | June 21 - July 22. You will have to do something you don't want to do, simply because someone else has the power to make you. Do it with a smile.

Leo | July 23 - Aug. 22. With the Sun, your ruler, at odds with Pluto today, chances are you will have to do a lot of explaining.

Virgo | Aug. 23 - Sept. 22. People who have an inflated sense of their own importance are often easy to influence and you can use that fact to your advantage today.

Libra | Sept. 23 - Oct. 22. It appears that someone has a grudge against you and you don't have the faintest idea why. The only way to find out is to ask.

Scorpio | Oct. 23 - Nov. 21. Someone in authority will give you a hard time today and you may be tempted to hit back at him or her in some way. Don't!

Sagittarius | Nov. 22 - Dec. 21. Someone is jealous of the attention you have been getting and would like nothing better than to see you take a fall.

Capricorn | Dec. 22 - Jan 20. You don't have to exert yourself to any great extent today. You just have to persuade others to do things for you. Easy.

Aquarius | Jan. 21 - Feb 18. Don't give someone the impression that you agree with what they say when, secretly, you disagree.

Pisces | Feb. 19 - March 20. The whole idea of life is to try new things and that, inevitably, means making mistakes. Go out and make some more. SALLY BROMPTON

Caption Contest

"Ah, I think they're a size six and a half."
Tony

LIONEL CIRONNEAU/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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14kt white gold with 55 diamonds (2.75 cttw) tennis bracelet

Appraisal value: $6,200.00
J&M Regular Price $2,560.00

J&M Sale Price $1.644.00

10kt classic hand-carved cameo brooch

Appraisal value: $1,500.00
J&M Regular Price $749.00

J&M Sale Price $487.00

14kt yellow gold dangling earrings set with cubic zircons, 3.36 grams

J&M Regular Price $139.00

J&M Sale Price $90.00

18kt curb link chain with 1.00 carat round brilliant cut diamond

Appraisal value: $12,800.00
J&M Regular Price $7,279.00

J&M Sale Price $4,731.00

18kt white gold pendant with 61 diamonds (0.89 cttw)

Appraisal value: $2,100.00
J&M Regular Price $795.00

J&M Sale Price $517.00

18kt white gold bracelet, polished finishing, chess-style diamond cut pattern links, 18.21 grams

J&M Regular Price $1,490.00

J&M Sale Price $968.00

14kt gold bracelet with 36 diamonds (1.08 cttw)

Appraisal value: $6,200.00
J&M Regular Price $2,789.00

J&M Sale Price $1,812.00

10kt yellow gold 'wave'-style hoop earrings, 1.76 grams

J&M Regular Price $85.00

J&M Sale Price $55.00

Pair of vintage dress clips with 4.6 cttw baguette and round diamonds

Appraisal value: $17,800.00
J&M Regular Price $8,495.00

J&M Sale Price $6,496.00

14kt two-toned mens' wedding band, 7.3 grams

J&M Regular Price $473.00

J&M Sale Price $377.00

18kt white gold band, 3.8 grams

J&M Regular Price $311.00

J&M Sale Price $250.00

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14kt yellow gold mens' solid curb link 22" necklace, 23.71 grams

J&M Regular Price $1,534.00

J&M Sale Price $1,227.00

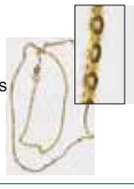
.950 platinum band, 4.69 grams

J&M Regular Price $565.00

J&M Sale Price $365.00

Dare to compare!

We checked out the competition at mall stores and our every day prices are *still* better than their sale prices!



1.36 gram chain purchased on sale December 30, 2011, for $125.00

J&M every-day price for the same item on that day was $60.93

You would have saved $64.07

1.26 gram chain purchased on sale January 4, 2012, for $128.00

J&M every-day price for the same item on that day $79.13

You would have saved $48.87

J&M Price Comparison

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J&M Sale Price $37.80

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